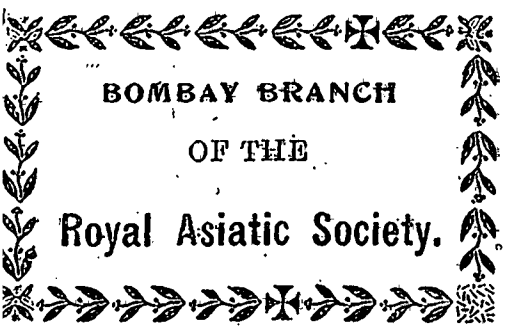

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Life & times of
Salvator Rosa by
Sydney Morgan
1824

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PREFACE.

SHOULD it be deemed worthy of enquiry, why I had selected the life of Salvator Rosa as a subject of biographical Memoir, in preference to that of any other illustrious painter of the Italian Schools, I answer; that I was influenced in my preference more by the peculiar character of the man, than the extraordinary merits of the artist. For, admiring the works of the great Neapolitan master, with an enthusiasm unknown perhaps to the sobriety of professed *virtù*, I estimated still more highly the qualities of the Italian patriot, who, stepping boldly in advance of a degraded age, stood in the foreground of his times, like one of his own spirited and

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graceful figures, when all around him was timid mannerism and grovelling subserviency!

Struck, as I had always been, with the philosophical tone and poetical conception of Salvator's greater pictures, even to the feeling a degree of personal interest in favour of their creator, I took the opportunity of my residence in Italy to make some verbal enquiries as to the private character and story of a man, whose powerful intellect and deep feeling, no less than his wild and gloomy imagination, came forth even in his most petulant sketches and careless designs.

From tradition, little is to be obtained in a land, where it is equally perilous to indulge in the memory of the past, or the hope of the future: but it was also evident, that over the name of Salvator Rosa there hung some spell, dark as one of his own incantations. For though in answer to my applications on this subject I was, in one or two instances, referred for information to the *Parnasso Italiano*; in

none was I directed to those contemporary sources from whence the most impartial accounts were to be derived. The *Parnasso Italiano* is one of the few modern works in Italy sanctioned by the constituted authorities, and published, as its license asserts, "*with the full approbation of the Grand Inquisitor of the Holy Office.*" In its consecrated pages I found Salvator Rosa described as being "of low birth and indigent circumstances—of a subtile organization and an unregulated mind;—one whose life had been disorderly, and whose associates had been chosen among musicians and buffoons." This discrepancy between the *man* and his *works*, though authenticated by the seal of the "*Holy Office*," awakened suspicions, which led to farther enquiry and deeper research. It was then I discovered, that the sublime painter of the Saul and the Job was in fact the precise reverse, in life and character, of all that he had been represented by the hired literary agents of

those bad institutions, which he had so boldly and so ably attacked both by his pencil and his pen: for he was not "subtile," but uncompromising; not "unregulated," but concentrated; not "one living with buffoons," but with sages. It was equally evident, that the cause which covered the memory of one of the greatest painters and most philosophical poets of Italy with obloquy was not the vice of the man, but the moral independence and political principle of the *patriot!* I found Salvator Rosa standing in the gap of time between Michael Angelo the patriot artist, and Filicaja the poet of Liberty. The inheritor of much of the genius and all the good old Italian spirit of the first, he was also the precursor of the political free breathings of the last,—compared to whom he appears, like his own Desert-prophet in the Colonna palace, lonely indeed and wild, but not uninspired. As I found, so I have represented him; and if (led by a natural sympathy to make common cause with all who suffer by misrepresentation),

I have been the first (my only merit) to light a taper at the long-neglected shrine, and to raise the veil of calumny from the splendid image of slandered genius, I trust it is still reserved for some compatriot hand to restore the memory of Salvator Rosa to all its "original brightness," as when the muse of the Arno was exclusively occupied in singing his praises. Many minute details and interesting facts of this extraordinary man may yet doubtless be obtained by a native of Italy, which it was difficult or impossible for a foreigner and one writing at so remote a distance to procure. The verbal information which I have extorted, has been in truth but scanty. Of the number of distinguished friends I had made and left in that country, (the lustre of whose blue skies has not yet faded from my imagination,) few now reside there, and fewer still are in a situation to give me any assistance. Many have been condemned to death! the greatest number have saved life by perilous evasion and indigent exile; and some, at the moment I write, uncertain of

their fate, are wearing out their prime of existence in solitary confinement, cut off from all human intercourse, save what they hold, (if *that may be called human,*) with their gaolers and inquisitors.

From the general intimidation which prevails throughout Italy, little was to be hoped from the contributions of mere acquaintances. The proscription of my work on that country by the King of Sardinia, the Emperor of Austria, and the Pope, rendered it dangerous even to receive my letters or to answer them. An English lady of high rank and unbounded influence in Rome, who, in any other cause but in that of two such notorious *Carbonari,* must have been eminently successful, exerted herself to the utmost for me and my Salvator; all, however, that her inexhaustible kindness (for such it has been) could effect, was to procure me a Catalogue of Salvator's pictures now remaining in Rome, and in this Catalogue "the Prometheus" (one of the most celebrated)

was omitted. By far the greater number of Salvator's works are in Great Britain; and from many of their possessors and other lovers of the arts, I have received information wherever I have applied for it. I beg more particularly to offer my acknowledgments to the Earl of Darnley, Earl Grosvenor, Earl Cowper, Earl of Miltown, the Honourable William Ponsonby, Richard Power, Esq., General Cockburn, Weld Hartstrong, Esq., ——— Heley, Esq., her Grace the Duchess of Devonshire, the Marchioness Dowager of Lansdowne, and to the Baron Denon. I now dismiss my first attempt at biographical writing with more of hope than apprehension; and commit it to the indulgence of that Public, which is the sole umpire for whose suffrage an author should be solicitous, as it is the only tribunal from whose decision there is no appeal.

SYDNEY MORGAN.

Kildare-street,
Dublin, October 1st, 1823.

CORRIGENDA.

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Page 2, 8,	l. 20,	*for* Tibur,	*read* Tiber.
— 37,	l. 12,	— others,	— theirs.
— 39,	l. 19,	— apparut,	— apparut-il.
— —	l. 21,	— Dans,	— A.
— 40,	l. 18,	— que,	— qui.
— —	l. 19,	— convint,	— convinrent.
— 66,	note l. penult.	— abris,	— abus.
— 73,	l. 12,	— Falconi,	— Falcone.
— 95,	l. 12 & 13,	— Raphaelesca, Titianesca	— Raffaelesca, Tizianesca.
— 129,	l. 17,	— Silve,	— Selve.
— 133,	l. 12,	— La Scuolo,	— La Scuola.
— 171,	l. 14,	— madree,	— madre.
— 175,	l. 19,	— lieux,	— lieues.
— 180,	l. 3,	— jesuits,	— female jesuits.
— —	l. 22,	— reussis,	— reussi.
— 191,	l. 17,	— who,	— which.
— 200,	note l. ult.	— destroyed,	— lost.
— 216,	l. penult.	— grande,	— grandi.
— 222,	l. 20,	— remplis,	— remplies.
— 224,	l. 5,	— was,	— were.
— 230,	l. 17,	— Crescembeni,	— Crescimbeni.
— 238,	l. 18,	— Mongé,	— Monge.
— 250,	l. 8,	— Turlepin,	— Turlupin.
— 265,	l. 2,	— Piero,	— Pierrot.
— 275,	l. 16,	— d'énigme,	— de l'énigme.
— 296,	l. 5,	— artifice,	— artefice.
— 299,	l. 8,	— is,	— are.
— 334.	l. 16,	— fougeuse,	— fougueuse.
— —	l. 18,	— auraient-éternizer,	— aurait-éterniser.
— 357,	note l. ult.	— mio di Balaame,	— sia di Balaam.
— 359,	l. 18,	— cinque,	— cinq.
— —	l. 19,	— Jansenisme,	— Jansenius.
— 364,	note l. 1,	— of old,	— of the prosing continuator of.

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THE

LIFE AND TIMES

OF

SALVATOR ROSA.

CHAPTER I.

Influential causes of the progress and perfection of the Art of Painting during the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth Centuries—Importance of the early Masters of the Italian School—National Virtù—Influence of the Reformation on the Art and its Professors—Decline of the Art—The Ritrattisti and Limners of the Seventeenth Century—Patronage of the Stuarts and the Bourbons, and its effects—The State of the Art at the close of the Seventeenth Century—The two last great Italian Masters, Carlo Maratti and Salvator Rosa.

The perfection attained in the art of Painting during the middle ages, had its source in

the political combinations of times when a predominant hierarchy held the ascendant, and the Church was—the State.

Knowledge, which is supremacy as long only as it is a monopoly, was then the exclusive possession of the clergy; and the intellectual disparity, which existed between the many and the few, long continued to be the instrument of delusions, of which ignorance inevitably becomes the dupe and the victim.

To support the powerful system of priestly domination, which for ages governed the nations of Europe and their rulers, the efforts of human intellect and the products of human genius were discarded or brought forward, as the exigencies of successive epochs dictated. The same hierarchy which, at one period, found its account in burning the works of Cicero, and casting the statues of Praxiteles into the Tibur*, in another, restored the

* Under Gregory (the first Pope and Saint) surnamed the Great. The hatred of this pontiff against the ancient

philosophy of Aristotle, and proposed the elevation of Raphael to the dignity of the cardinalate.

The splendid architecture and elegant decorations of the pagan temples of Greece and Rome had been rejected by the nascent Church, as recalling, through their associations, the doctrines and practices of that brilliant religion, which it was the interest of its sterner successor to bury in oblivion. But, when the rude monstrosities pictured on the walls of the ancient ecclesiastical edifices of Lombardy, and the unavailing crusades of the Iconoclasts against the imaginative tendencies of the Italians, exhibited the innate

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religion of Rome was so fierce, and his desire to destroy all remembrance of it so ardent, that he is accused of having reduced to ashes the Palatine Library collected by Augustus Cæsar, and of having thrown the most precious works of antiquity into the Tiber. This policy, though barbarous, was expedient for the day—the sixth century.

impulse of the people towards decoration, the Church, taught by experimental demonstration the difficulty of securing faith by abstractions, or of satisfying the passions with invisible objects of adoration, wisely enlisted the arts in her service.

Painting (which, in the progress of civilization, precedes music*, as being less abstracted in its principles, and more tangible in its effects) was, even as early as the thirteenth century, adopted by the Church as a means of riveting her power, by bringing over the senses

* The study and elaborate combinations required in the perfection of music as a science can never belong to barbarous times. The works of Memni and Martini, the portrait-painters, are still extant, while the vocal music of Petrarch's age is wholly lost. "The expression of music," says Dr. Burney, "in so remote a period is so entirely lost, that, like a dead language, no one is certain how it is pronounced. Petrarch and Boccacio were both celebrated players on the lute; but the music of much more recent times sounds monotonous and barbarous to modern ears."

to her interest. Its effects were magical: it personified the essence which thought could not reach; it depicted the mystery which reason could not explain; it revealed the beatitudes of Heaven, and the punishments of Hell, in imagery which struck upon the dullest apprehensions and intimidated the hardiest conscience; and the Madonnas of Cimabue* and the saints of Giotto† were found to be no less

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* The people of Florence were so struck by the Madonna of Cimabue, that the picture was carried in procession, with sound of trumpet, to the church of *Santa Maria Novella*, where it may still be seen in the chapel de' Ruccellai. The same painting gave the name of Borgo Allegro to the little village in which it was painted.

† Giotto, the friend and portrait-painter of Dante, was courted and employed by all the pontiffs and pious princes of his day; particularly by Clement the Fifth, and King Robert of Naples. Dante's well known lines

"Credette Cimabue nella pittura
Tener lo campo, ed ora ha Giotto il grido," &c.

brought him still more into fashion. In another age

influential in their calling, than the councils of the assembled Church and the Bulls of the Lateran. Eyes, which shed no tears over the recited sufferings of the Saviour, wept gratefully over the pictured agonies of a self-sacrificed mediator; and stubborn knees, unused to bend in mental devotion, dropped involuntarily before shrines where a fair young mother and her blooming offspring, a virgin parent and an infant God, awakened religious adoration through human sympathies.

The doctrines of a mystic creed thus enforced through palpable forms addressed to the affections, powerfully assisted to awaken faith through feeling; for that which is felt, it is difficult to doubt, and that which satisfies the senses, is vainly distrusted by the understanding.

Giotto might have been the protector of Dante; for the Church soon discovered that artists were less likely to paint heresy than such poets and philosophers as Dante and Petrarch to preach it.

The people likewise, denied the use of the Scriptures, were now taught much of what it was expedient they should know, from pictures. The art, in process of time, became an acknowledged state-engine; and the artists, virtually, if not nominally, acting as ministers, were soon subsidized as allies.*

In Italy a public taste inevitably sprang from this political expediency; and habits of long-practised judgment and well-exercised discrimination produced the singular phenomenon of a nation of virtuosi. Towards the commencement of the sixteenth century the Roman and Tuscan people had become, with respect to painting, what the lowest of the Athenians had once been with respect to

* Raphael was offered a cardinal's hat, and Pope Giulio was the friend, and almost the slave, of Michael Angelo. Leo the Tenth courted the aid and suffrages of all the artists of his day, whom he flattered, however, more than he rewarded. In latter times painters presided in cabinets and were appointed to embassies. Rubens supported a high diplomatic character.

language! The orators of a free government had made a nation of philologists; a church despotism had created a population of dilettanti. For governments, in particular stages of society, make the people: in others, the people make the governments.

While the natives of a country, which once fought for the mastery of the world, were occupied with an art to which all pretended, the munificent merchants of the Italian republics entered into competition with popes and princes; and if they could not outbid such sumptuous competitors, they at least assisted in raising the price of the precious commodities. Thus, from the period when poetry held the ascendant in the persons of Dante and Petrarch, to the birth of philosophy in the cradle of Galileo, the rich rewards of genius flowed exclusively in one channel, and were lavished on those great painters and sculptors, whose works, while they beautified churches and embellished shrines, contributed

to extend a system that rejected no ally however feeble, nor refused any support however incongruous.

The great poets of the sixteenth century were forced to woo their patrons; the painters were to be courted, and were rarely won unsought. The immortal creators of the "Jerusalem" and the "Orlando" waited despondingly in the antechambers of the pitiful D'Este, while Vinci took his place in the saloons of kings, and Titian rejected the invitations of Emperors.* The spirit of the times directing, as it always will, the genius of individuals, tied down the most enlightened people of the world to the pursuit of an ornamental art. Under other circumstances, and in another age, Raphael might have been

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* Leonardo da Vinci was the guest of Francis the First, and died in his arms at Fontainebleau. Titian refused the special invitations of Charles the Fifth, and of Philip the Second, his son.

no less "divine" as a poet, than as a painter*; and Leonardo might have shone the first of experimental philosophers, as he was the most eminent of artists.

In the progress of society new combinations effected new results. The Clements, the Giulios, the Leos, † the Leonardos, the Raphaels, and the Michael Angelos,—with the glorious republics of Italy, whose free institutions had tended so powerfully to the developement of genius,—all vanished from the scene; and towards the close of the sixteenth century new interests and new wants arose, which occasioned new adaptations of human ingenuity. The Reformation came—the greatest event of

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* The little that has reached posterity of Raphael's poetry is quite as ethereal as his heads of female saints.

† There is nothing so different as the characters and policy of these stormy and warlike pontifical statesmen, and those of their successors in the seventeenth century, who reigned temporally and spiritually by what Cardinal de Retz calls "*les finoteries du Vatican.*"

modern times. It was the policy of the new religion to carry on her system by a stern rejection of all the meretricious means by which the old church had effected her scheme of usurpation. She wanted no pictures, and patronized no artists.* Equally bent upon

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* Among the votes passed in the Parliament of 1636 were two sufficiently singular, exceeding even the persecution of the arts by the first Protestant Reformers. "Ordered, that all such pictures there (in the royal collection) as shall have the representation of the second person of the Trinity on them, shall be forthwith burnt; that all such pictures as have the representation of the Virgin Mary upon them, shall be forthwith burnt." The pictures without any superstition upon them were sold for the benefit of *the poor Irish!!—See Journal of the House of Commons.*

This destruction of pictures during the first heat of the Revolution, was in some measure political as well as religious; being a counter-blow to that taste for the Fine Arts, which Charles had endeavoured to render national, to the neglect of better things. Luther, the least rigid of all reformers, retaining some of the old

supremacy as her great predecessor, she called in new aids to accomplish her ends; she affected to engage reason on her side, and to found faith on proof. But more bent on her object, than considerate of her means, she discarded too little or too much; and did not foresee that reason, usurping the territory it was called in to defend, would eventually

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tastes of the Augustan Monk, struggled against a barbarous and indiscriminate attack on the arts. On the idolatrous subject of pictures he dared not interfere, (though vastly fond of multiplying his own portrait and that of his "very ugly wife"), but he stickled hard for a little music in his church. Being himself a composer, and the best singer in the choir at Erfurt, he confessed that he "prized music above all sciences except theology," and even went so far as to compose his catechism in verse that he might set it to music. The famous confession of Augsburg was actually *done* into a metrical ballad. Calvin, however, who had "no music in his soul," waged war on all the arts, and declared even playing on the organ "a foolish vanity."

throw light on the retained abuses, as it had upon those rejected. In discarding the arts and preserving the tithes, the reformed church at once loosened her strongest hold on the imagination, and armed the more calculating passions against her.

Philosophy, meanwhile, leaving reform to its struggles, and theology to its sophisms, availed herself of the licence of the times, and of the inquiring spirit of the age. She came forth with her great experimental truths to better the condition of humanity, to lessen its inflictions, to meet its wants, and to diminish the many "*ills which flesh is heir to.*" Her object was the happiness of mankind; and her agent, knowledge. Obstructed in every step of her progress,—condemned as infidel, for expounding the laws of nature,—and persecuted for truths, for which she deserved to be deified, still she advanced—slowly indeed, but firmly: moral and phy-

sical evil, error and disease, bigotry and the plague, receded before her luminous progress. Philosophers, it is true, perished in the dungeons of inquisitions, or fed the flames of an *auto da fé;* but philosophy survived, and triumphed. Not so the art, which had so long made a part and parcel of the church and state legislature of Christendom.

In the beginning of the seventeenth century, the great market for painting was closing, never again to be opened with equal splendour, save under the pressure of exigencies, vast, influential, and incorporated with the interests of society, as those in which the prosperity and perfection of the art had originated. The grand historical and epic masters of the splendid schools of Rome, Tuscany, and Lombardy, the schools of Raphael, of Da Vinci, and of the Caracci, were now replaced by the well-named "*Dependenti*" of cardinals, by the court limners of the Bourbons, and the "sergeant payntors"

of the Stuarts,—the subservient decorators of the Escurial, the Tuileries, and Whitehall.*

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* See the melancholy letter of Nicholas Poussin on the subject of his degrading residence in the French court, and his eagerness to get back to Rome and escape from the royal patronage of the Louvre. Albano, though reduced to misery in his own country, in the true spirit of the old Italian masters, refused the invitation of Charles the First of England, though conveyed in a royal autograph. Carlo Maratti rejected a similar proposal from the first great Duke of Buckingham, who had adopted his master's passion for the arts. By the by, it is curious to observe in Vertue's Catalogue of the pictures of Charles the First, that three-fourths were presents from his courtiers; so that his encouragement of the arts was much at the expense of parasites, or such as expected a place for a picture.

The reluctance of the Italian masters to embrace the servitude of the ultra-montane courts arose from the fate of some of their special *protegés*. Vanderdort was in such awe of his patron Charles the First, that he hung himself in despair, for having mislaid a miniature by Gibson, which the King called for, and which was found

The system of politics, which, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, drove nearly all Europe to the hazardous experiment of revolution, had its influence on the arts, and assisted with other causes to degrade its professors. It was in vain that such names as Rubens, Poussin, and Vandyke, illustrated and almost redeemed the list of court painters of this degraded epoch. Even the brilliant genius of such men submitted to the influence of the times; and an eternal series of hatchet-faced kings and flaxen-wigged queens, with all their allegorical virtues,—unreal as the monsters by which they were represented,—afford a running commentary on the dictation imposed on the art, and on the influence exercised by the presuming patronage and the overweening conceit of princely pretenders.

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after his death. The conduct of Louis XIV. to the unfortunate Petitot is notorious.—*See Walpole's Painters*, p. 258.

Royal vanity, which, like "self-love, loves portraits*," circumscribed those talents which

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* "*L'amour propre aime les portraits.*" La Bruyere.—Of this axiom, Queen Elizabeth, Charles the First, and Louis the Fourteenth, give the most striking illustrations. Queen Elizabeth made it penal to buy an ugly picture, and *leze majesté* for a limner not to flatter her. She is generally represented with all the attributes of royal power and sovereign beauty, while Junos, Venuses, and Minervas fly before her to hide their diminished heads where they may. Charles the First's melancholy visage is to be seen in every collection in Europe, from the numberless portraits which filled his own gallery, the contents of which were so dispersed. He made Rembrandt paint him as Saint George; and Vandyke and others painted him under the form of every saint in the Calendar. Louis the Fourteenth, on the contrary, flourishes on the walls and ceilings of Versailles and of the Tuileries as Jupiter or Apollo, surrounded by his mistresses as the Graces; while the Virtues are oddly enough allegorized as monsters. Still, in all these portraits there is much of the "human face divine;" but what will posterity say to the pictures of some of the "Singes tigres" of reigning dynasties?—those of Sar-

should have belonged to ages and to nations, within the narrow limits of Blackfriars* and the Louvre. It was in vain that state-ministers created academies, that state-mistresses awarded prizes, that orders were conferred and pensions were granted. Still, "*with all appliances and means to boot*," the genius of painting sunk beneath such distinctions. The secret and the importance of the art were lost together.† The fires which had warmed

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dinia and Naples, for instance?—or even of the portraits of the "Hun, the Goth, and the Calmuc," as inseparably connected as Brown, Jones, and Robinson, (the heroes of "Reading made easy,") and henceforward to be designated in history as the "three gentlemen of Verona?"

* Vandyke, when he arrived in England, was lodged among the King's artists at Blackfriars, whither the King frequently came, bespeaking pictures of the Queen, his children, and his courtiers.

† Portrait-painting, as a distinct branch of the art, only began with the commencement of the seventeenth century, when the name of "*ritrattisti*" was given to the Italian limners of that day. "Till we have other pictures than portraits, (says H. Walpole) and painting has

the soul of Michael Angelo under the dome of the Vatican, were quenched; the zeal which led the pilgrim steps of the Caracci and their disciples* to Rome and Naples, was no more; and, towards the end of the seventeenth century, that long list of illustrious masters, who, by their mighty genius and lofty spirits, had raised the art to its highest excellence, and given dignity to the profession, was closed for ever, and terminated in the person of one, well worthy of the splendid but melancholy preeminence,—one who, dis-

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ampler fields to range in than private apartments, it is in vain to expect that the arts will recover their genuine lustre." Kneller, the last eminent name given to the arts before that barbarous interval which occurred in England between his day and that of Sir J. Reynolds, had turned the *profession* into a *trade*. Such men, where they offered one picture to fame, sacrificed twenty to lucre, and lessened their own reputation, by making it subservient to their fortunes.

* Dominichino, Guido, Lanfranco, &c. &c.

tinguished above all his predecessors as the

"Famoso pittore delle cose morali,"

has still been more celebrated than known, by the name of SALVATOR ROSA.*

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* The Flemish school, which succeeded to the Italian, was comparatively but of short duration. It opened and closed within a century. From Cimabue, the founder of the Italian school, to Carlo Maratti and Salvator Rosa, who were esteemed the *last of its masters*, there is included a space of nearly five centuries.

CHAPTER II.

Political and Social State of Italy, and more particularly of Naples, in the Seventeenth Century—The family of Rosa—Birth of Salvator—He receives the diminutive appellation of *Salvatoriello*—Parental Speculations—Salvator's domestic Education—Peculiarity of temperament, and early indications of genius—Flagellation in the Monastery of the *Certosa*—Departure for the *Collegio della Congregazione Somasca*—Rapid progress in the *Humanities*. The School of Philosophy then in vogue in the Italian Universities, neglected by Salvator—He acquires skill upon several musical instruments—Returns to the village of Renella.

The seventeenth century, an age so big with events, so important in its influence on the rest of Europe, was to Italy an epoch of degradation and disgraceful ruin. It laid her prostrate before the House of Austria, and submitted her to the tyranny of that fatal race, whose dull but dire policy, like the juice of the

herb that kills silently,* has ever been to destroy by numbing;—a race which, in treading on the natural and political rights of those subjected to its leaden sway, has retrograded civilization, by palsying intellect, and checked the progress of science, by interdicting all freedom of discussion and play of thought, to the uttermost limits of its bayonets and its tribunals.†

From the time of Charles the Fifth, the balance of Europe leaned towards the house of Hapsbourg. Masters of Spain, of Portugal, and South America, of Bohemia, Hungary, and Germany,—of the whole of the North of Italy and the kingdom of the two Sicilies,—the

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* The Indian Cuvare, or poison of Guiana.

† The crusade against mind was so fiercely carried on in Italy at this time, that even the Medici could not protect their friend Marchetti from the Inquisition, whose vengeance under the Austro-Spanish influence, was roused by that writer's translation of Lucretius, which Cosmo the Third was obliged to suppress.

descendants of the Emperor and King would inevitably have subdued all Europe to their rule, and have realized the scheme of universal empire, but that their dullness perpetually marred their luck.* The division of the empire at the death of Charles the Fifth was the first blow to their supremacy. On this occasion Spain fell to the elder branch, in the person of the atrocious *Philip the Second.*† The dark temperament of this proverbial tyrant, and of his immediate successors, directed their unlimited power to the utter ruin of liberty wherever it appeared; and their enormous wealth enabled them to succeed in the attempt,

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* "Si tant d'états avaient été réunis sous un seul chef de cette maison, il est à croire que l'Europe lui aurait enfin été asservie."—*Voltaire, Siècle de Louis XIV.*

† "L'Espagne, gouvernée par la branche aînée de la maison d'Autriche, avait imprimé après la mort de Charles Quint plus de terreur que la nation Germanique. Les Rois d'Espagne étaient incomparablement plus absolus et plus riches."—*Voltaire, Siècle de Louis XIV.*

wherever public men were corruptible. Spain, with all her chivalrous spirit and old Castilian pride, was crushed beneath the horrible weight of the Inquisition, which Austrian rulers had established in the heart of her ancient capital. The Low Countries, maddened by oppression into insurrection, had resisted in vain, and were governed by the faggot and the sword: while the beautiful kingdom of Naples, the brightest gem in the Austro-Spanish diadem, became to Spain, what Ireland has been to England,—a suffering, degraded, and barbarized province.

Under Philip the Fourth and his sordid and oppressive viceroys, the natural fertility and internal riches of Naples were insufficient to supply the rapine and cupidity of a government upheld by violence and conducted by fraud. Its cities were depopulated to feed the armies of its remote tyrants, and their inhabitants marched to far distant countries to fight in battles wholly unconnected with the national interests. Its territory was drained of its

wealth, and the industry of its people was alienated, to replenish the treasury of the mother-country. Still, however, tyranny could not cloud the Neapolitan sun, nor deform the fair face of nature. "Man was the only growth that withered there;" and Naples, with its classical sites, was not less romantically lovely and wildly picturesque, than it now appears to the modern traveller's gaze, when, in the midst of moral and political degradation, it still looks like "a part of heaven dropped on earth."

The sweeping semicircle which the most fantastic and singular city of Naples marks on the shore of its unrivalled bay, from the Capo di Pausilippo to the Torrione del Carmine, is dominated by a lofty chain of undulating hills, which take their distinctive appellations from some local peculiarity, or classical tradition. The high and insulated rock of St. Elmo, which overtops the whole, is crowned by that terrible fortress to which it gives its name,—a fearful and impregnable citadel, that, since

the first moment when it was raised by an Austrian conqueror* to the present day, when it is garrisoned by a Bourbon with Austrian troops, has poured down the thunder of its artillery to support the violence, or proclaim the triumphs, of foreign interference over the rights and liberties of a long-suffering and oft-resisting people.

Swelling from the base of the savage St. Elmo, smile the lovely heights of *San Martino*,

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* Charles the Fifth. The natives of free states who have not visited the Continent, cannot judge of the horrors of these strong holds of unlimited despotism. It is supposed that the subterranean passages of St. Elmo, "stained with many a midnight murder," communicate with the Castello Nuovo in the city beneath, and that, like the terrible labyrinths of the catacombs which open into them, their mysterious intricacies escape the research of all, save those who have a fearful interest in preserving the clue to these living tombs; where from age to age the bravest and the best have perished in *carcere duro* (as it is called in the jargon of modern Italian tribunals), better known as the terrific "*au secret*" of the French police.

where, through chesnut woods and vineyards, gleam the golden spires of the monastic palace of the Monks of the Certosa.* A defile cut through the rocks of the *Monte Dònzelle*, and shaded by the dark pines which spring from their crevices, forms an umbrageous pathway from the superb convent to the *Borgo di Renella*, the little capital of a neighbouring hill, which, for the peculiar beauty of its position and the views it commands, is still called "*l'ameno villaggio.*" At night, the fires of Vesuvius almost bronze the humble edifices of Renella; and the morning sun, as it rises, discovers from various points the hills of Vomiro and Pausilippo, the shores of Puzzuolo and of Baiæ, the islets of Nisiti, Capri, and Procida, till the view fades into the extreme verge of the horizon, where the waters of the

* The pavilions of the Caliphs of Bagdad were not so deliciously placed, nor so sumptuously raised, as this retreat of the self-denying brotherhood of the Certosa. It was founded in the fourteenth century by Charles, son of Robert of Arragon, King of Naples.

Mediterranean seem to mingle with those clear skies, whose tint and lustre they reflect.

In this true "*nido paterno*" of genius there dwelt, in the year 1615, an humble and industrious artist called Vito Antonio Rosa,—a name even then not unknown to the arts, though as yet more known than prosperous. Its actual possessor, the worthy Messire Antonio, had, up to this time, struggled, with his good wife Giulia Grecca and two daughters still in childhood, to maintain the ancient respectability of his family. Antonio was an architect and land-surveyor of some note, but of little gains; and if over the old architectural portico of the Casaccia* of Renella might be read—

"*Vito Antonio Rosa, Agremensore ed Architetto;*"†

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* Every Italian village has its Casaccia (literally the great but ugly house), the dilapidated palace or villa of some former lord of the district, which in process of time falls to the lot of decayed gentility, or of struggling indigence. Nothing can be more desolate than the Casaccia.

† "*Mediocre Architetto,*" says Passeri.

the intimation was given in vain! Few passed through the decayed Borgo of Renella, and still fewer, in times so fearful, were able to profit by the talents and profession which the inscription advertised. The family of Rosa, inconsiderable as it was, partook of the pressure of the times; and the pretty Borgo, like its adjacent scenery, (no longer the haunt of Consular voluptuaries,—neither frequented by the great nor visited by the curious,) stood lonely and beautiful,—unencumbered by those fantastic *belvideras* and grotesque pavilions, which in modern times rather deform than beautify a site, for which Nature has done all, and Art can do nothing.

The cells of the Certosa, indeed, had their usual complement of lazy monks and "*Frati conversi.*" The fortress of St. Elmo then, as now, manned by Austrian troops, glittered with foreign pikes. The cross rose on every acclivity, and the sword guarded every pass; but the villages of Renella, San Martino, of the Vomiro, and of Pausilippo, were thinned

of their inhabitants to recruit foreign armies; and this earthly paradise was dreary as the desert, and silent as the tomb.

The Neapolitan barons, those restless but brave feudatories, whose resistance to their native despots preserved something of the ancient republican spirit of their Greek predecessors, now fled from the capital. They left its beautiful environs to Spanish viceroys, and to their official underlings; and sullenly shut themselves up in their domestic fortresses of the Abruzzi or of Calabria. "La Civiltà," a class then including the whole of the middle and professional ranks of society of Naples, was struggling for a bare existence in the towns and cities. Beggared by taxation, levied at the will of their despots, and collected with every aggravation of violence, its members lived under the perpetual "*surveillance*" of foreign troops and domestic *sbirri*, whose suspicions their brooding discontents were well calculated to nourish.

The people—the debased, degraded people—had reached that maximum of suffering beyond which human endurance cannot go. They were famishing in the midst of plenty, and, in regions the most genial and salubrious, were dying of diseases, the fearful attendants on want. Commerce was at a stand, agriculture was neglected, and the arts, under the perpetual dictatorship of a Spanish court painter, had no favour but for the "*Seguaci*" of "*Lo Spagnuoletto.*"*.

In such times of general distress and oppression, when few had the means or the spirit to build, and still fewer had lands to measure or property to transfer, it is little wonderful that the humble architect and land-surveyor

* Giuseppe Ribera, called *Lo Spagnuoletto*, was a native of Spain, but esteemed one of the greatest masters of the Neapolitan school. With respect to the arts in Naples, all influence and patronage centered in his person; and his *seguaci*, or followers, became a powerful faction.

of Renella "was steeped to the very lip in poverty," from which neither talent nor industry could relieve him. Still, however, with few wants and a penurious economy, he had contrived to struggle on with his wife and daughters, in a sort of decent insolvency, when the birth of a son, in the latter end of the year 1615, came to raise the spirits of the family, as an auspicious event. The birth of a male child, among the Neapolitans, to whom female children are always *à charge*, was then, as now, considered a special favour conferred by the tutelar saint of the family. Madonna Giulia had scarcely gotten over her *ricevimento** (a ceremony in which all the Neapolitan women, not of the lowest rank, indulge,) than she began to consult with the good Messire Antonio on the destiny of their infant child.

* In Naples, the day after an accouchement, an assembly is held in the bedroom of the convalescent, to which all the gossips of the neighbourhood resort. It is called "a reception."

He, "good easy man," had but one proposition to make: it was, that his son *should not be an artist*, and, above all, that he *should not be a painter;* to which Madonna Giulia the more readily agreed, not only because she was herself, like her husband, come of a family of indigent artists*, but because, at the very moment of this parental discussion, her brother, Paolo Grecco, was nearly starving in the midst of his own pots and palettes, in a little workshop in the Strada Seggio del Nido. Paolo Grecco was, in truth, but "*pittore assai mediocre*," as one of the family chroniclers affirms; and he was chiefly employed (when he had employment), like others in his neighbourhood of the Strada Seggio, in painting family

* "E non ostante che ben potesse dirse che gli studii del disegno oramai se fossero fatti proprii di tutto quel parentado (perchè tanto l'avo e 'l genitore quanto lo zio materno, con altri suoi antenati erano stati pittori) recusava egli di applicarvi il figliuolo."—*Baldinucci.*

saints and padrona virgins, *as bespoke.** From concurrent testimony it appears that Madonna Giulia was a devotee of the true Neapolitan cast—full of sanguine and familiar superstition. She saw the hierarchy of heaven, "not as through a smoked glass, but face to face," could tell the colour of the Virgin's eyes, the number of St. Peter's keys, and had a gossiping acquaintance with every saint in the calendar. She wore her spindle in one side of her girdle, and her crucifix in the other, and spun and prayed with equal unction and facility; but, above all, she took no step, either with reference to this life or the next, without a special conference with her confessor and the Madonna. It was, perhaps, under the particular inspiration of both that she formed the idea, with the consent of the complying *Vito Antonio,* of devoting their son —their only son—to the church; or, in the

* Notizie appartenenti alla vita di Salvator Rosa.

words of the family historian, "*alla Lettura*;" for none then approached the Muses but in the livery of religion. The Italian poets of that age were at least Abbati; and the councils of the Della Crusca rarely admitted genius that came not duly labelled with the *petit collet*.

The sacred calling of the future Reverendissimo began in the parish church of Renella, where, to secure his salvation by the shortest road to Paradise, he received at the baptismal font that name which was supposed to consecrate its owner to the special protection of Heaven,—the name of SALVATORE. "For never," says an Italian divine, "has it been known that God has permitted the devil to torture in hell a man who bore this name."*

Confirmed by the force of their own volition that their son should be a divine, and *should*

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* "Che il Signore Iddio avesse permesso al demonio di strapazzare nell' inferno uomo che portasse tal nome."—*Il Padre Baldovino.*

not be a painter, the good Antonio and Giulia Rosa saw visions of mitres and pontifical crowns floating round the cradle of the little Salvator, and were convinced that they had taken the best means of securing his present and future happiness by devoting him to the Church,—at all times the true temple of fortune in Italy, and at that particular epoch the only safe asylum for one who, by Divine indignation, was born a Neapolitan. It was thus the father of M. Angelo intended him for a woollen-weaver; that the father of Coreggio had destined him for a wood-cutter; that Guido was educated for a musician; Andrea Sartore for a tailor; Guercino for a stone-mason; Claude Lorraine for a baker; and Moliere for a *marchand frippier.** The course of genius, like that of

——" true love, seldom does run smooth;"

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* " Tous ceux qui se sont fait un nom dans les beaux arts, les ont cultivés malgré leurs parens, et la nature a été en eux plus forte que l'éducation."—*Voltaire.*

but the parental folly which stupidly interferes with nature's vocation is no less sure to expiate its presumption by the disappointment of all its schemes. One curious fact may be added to this general observation, that persons of genius are generally the offspring of ordinary parents, and the sires of ordinary children. Talent is no heir-loom; and Nature, in selecting *one* of a race as the subject of high endowments, seems to sum up all her forces on a point, and then to recall *her* honours, as kings do others; receiving back from the hands of the son the brilliant distinctions which their favour had conferred on the father.*

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* If genius, as physiologists suppose, consists in a peculiar developement of organs, it may be that Nature, who never rests in her progress, having attained perfection, hurries on to an opposite extreme; and thus, though both parents should possess the intellectual temperament, the child would only be the more exposed to the vice of excess. In general, however, the offspring is not a pure reflexion of its parents; but exhibits traces of the peculiarities of remoter relations.

The first incident which occurred in the life of Salvator Rosa proved the vanity of all parental calculation. Scarcely had he thrown off the bondage of the "*bambino fasciato,*"* and extricated his little limbs from the swathings and bands by which, like other helpless Neapolitan children, he was occasionally hung up behind the door of the old *Casaccia,* while his pious mother offered her devotions at the golden shrines of the Certosa, than he became the very sprite of the *Borgo Renella;* and by his vivacity and gesticulations "*alla 'sua moda Napolitana*" lost that holy and protecting appellation, which was to be his pass to futurity, in the vulgarized diminutive of Salvatoriello.

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* These horrible *swaddling clothes* are still preserved in Italy, and are so protected by church and state, that the parish priests have been known to reprove mothers who are so jacobinical as to adopt the English manner of dressing infants. They are said to be equally indignant at the introduction of vaccination,—in their eyes a "*blasphemy,*" if not absolutely "*sedition.*"

To counteract, however, a nickname of such sorry omen, Antonio and his wife applied themselves with redoubled diligence to their original scheme of education; and sought to give impressions beyond the reach of time, accident, or even nicknames, to efface. They had their son taught to read out of the legends of Santa Caterina di Sienna, made him learn his prayers in Latin, from the "Salve" to the "Regina cœlorum," before he knew any language save his own Neapolitan; and, as a penance task upon "a truant disposition" too frequently indulged through life, they even gave him some of the two hundred and thirty questions of Albert le Grand to expound.*

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* These questions, which at one time occupied society as being important to salvation, are sufficiently curious; which the following specimens will shew:

"Sous quelle forme l'ange lui (à Marie) apparut; forme serpentine ou colombine?

"Dans quel age? dans quel habit?

"Est-ce avec un habit blanc et propre? ou avec un habit noir et crasseux?

But while the worthy heads of the Casa Rosa were thus taking "the broad way and the sure" to worldly prosperity, conformably with every step of the "social order" of their day, their luckless son was neither instructed nor amused in the progress of his orthodox education. The famous Jean Thauliere (Saint and Doctor) was not more impenetrably dull over his *golden alphabet* than the young Salvatoriello over the two hundred and thirty questions of Albert le Grand; to not one of which, either by any intuitive faculty of divination, or by any process of ratiocination, could he reply. But if he learned nothing, it appears very literally to have been because the subjects presented to his observation were not in accordance with the developement of his ideas, or with

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"Si Marie a eu une couleur et un teint que lui convint? Si sa peau a été noire? Quelle a été la couleur de ses cheveux? Si ils ont du être roux ou noirs?

"Quels ont été ses yeux? S'ils ont été noirs ou bruns?" &c.—*Histoire des Ordres Monastiques.*

the sympathies of his age; for, while unmeaning words were passing through his unretentive memory, *things* were impressing themselves on his ardent mind. Even in infancy, Nature—the idol of his matured worship—that Nature which he was born to illustrate in all her splendid aspects,—was speaking to his acute senses, and communicating her imagery in endless associations to his reproductive fancy. Her great volume was spread before him at "all times, all seasons, and their changes;" and while he gave up his young existence to its study and observation, the legends of saints and the history of miracles lay neglected. He appears to have possessed the true temperament of genius, which operated alike in infancy and in age. His fine, subtile, and nervous organization rendered even his childhood curious and inquiring, rapid in the perception of external objects, and prompt in reproducing them by efforts of imitation. The elements of genius were all there; the spirit of

passion was yet to give them their definite tendency. The luminous intellect of the future author of the Satires and of the Catiline conspiracy, — the quick and sensitive imagination which, shedding its rays upon the sterile science of ancient counterpoint, was destined to give developement to the cantata, and lay the foundations of the rich melodies of Paesiello and of Cimarosa, — was already giving out lights through the dim dawn of infancy: and if, to the dull apprehensions of the undiscerning they seemed "lights which led astray," they were not the less "lights from Heaven."*

Salvator is, in fact, described, even at this early age†, as evincing a disposition towards

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* "Aveva la natura del piccolo fanciullo gia incominciata a scoprire i primi lampi di quell' indole spiritosa di che aveva lo dotato con larga mano."—*Baldinucci, Vita de Salvator Rosa.*

† Pascoli says, "that the mind of Salvator Rosa, even in childhood, was an exhaustless mine of *ingenious conceptions* (miniera inesausta di pellegrini ingegni), and

all the arts, "lisping in numbers," waking the echoes of his native hills with every instrument his infant hand could procure, and producing scraps of antique architecture and of picturesque scenery upon cards and paper, which spoke, "trumpet-tongued," his instinctive and inevitable vocation. To Antonio, however, and to Giulia this was "idless all;" and the wanderings of the young genius served only to give fresh activity to their efforts to impose upon him the destiny which their original plans had chalked out for him; that he should not be a painter, and that he should be "a sage grave man," a pillar of the church, and the Coryphæus of every "*accademia*" that dullness and pedantry ever presided over.

The cord of paternal authority, thus drawn to its extreme tension, was naturally snapped.

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that he was born no less a poet than a painter."—"*Nato non meno poeta che pittore.*"

The truant Salvatoriello fled from the restraints of an uncongenial home, from Albert le Grand and Santa Caterina di Sienna, and took shelter among those sites and scenes whose imagery became a part of his own intellectual existence, and were received as impressions long before they were studied as subjects. Sometimes he was discovered by the *Padre Cercatore* of the convent of Renella among the rocks and caverns of Baiæ, the ruined temples of gods, or the haunts of Sibyls. Sometimes he was found by a gossip of Madonna Giulia, in her pilgrimage to a "*maesta*," sleeping among the wastes of the Solfatara, beneath the scorched branches of a blasted tree, his head pillowed by lava, and his dream most probably the vision of an infant poet's slumbers. For even then he was

"the youngest he
That sat in shadow of Apollo's tree,"

seeing Nature with a poet's eye, and sketching her beauties with a painter's hand.*

Chided as a truant and punished as an idler, he was frequently shut up in the old Casaccia, and destined to expiate his faults by conning his rubrick, or learning, under the guidance of his devout mother, the mystery and miracles of the rosary, as related in the legends of the "*Chiesa di San Dominico Maggiore*" of Naples, where the crucifix may still be seen which addressed St. Thomas Aquinas in the well-known words, "*Bene scripsisti de me, Thoma.*"

The resources of genius, however, are like those of the power from whence they spring,

* Rosa drew his first inspirations from the magnificent scenery of Pausilippo and Vesuvius; Hogarth found his in a pot-house at Highgate, where a drunken quarrel and a broken nose first "woke the god within him." Both, however, reached the sublime in their respective vocations,—Hogarth in the grotesque, and Salvator in the majestic.

exhaustless! Deprived of liberty, he made propitious offerings to that Nature he was forbidden to worship, within the "darksome rounds" of his domestic prison; and, by the simple instrumentality of some burned sticks, he covered the walls of the old house with the scenery of his favourite haunts. Vesuvius blazed over the faded frescoes of the dilapidated *guarda-roba*; and the old *loggia*, once the temple of aristocratic recreation, when the Casaccia was the palace of some Neapolitan prince, was converted into a panorama, representing the enchanting views it commanded of the bay with its coasts, woods, and mountains.*

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* "All' disegno pero sentiva si tirato per modo che non era muraglia di quella casa, o di altre, ove egli avesse potuto mettere la mano, che con certi *piccoli carboncelli*, non ricopresse, con sue invenzioni di piccole figure é paesetti, condotti pero fino a quel segno, che fare poteasi da esso, senza maestro ed in assai tenera età."—*Baldinucci.*

"*Santo sacramento!*" exclaimed Madonna Giulia with upraised hands and eyes, as she entered the loggia to take her "fresca," or evening's draught of fresh air. "*Cosa stupenda!*" re-echoed the simple *signorine*, his sisters, in stupid wonder at their brother's talent and temerity: and the luckless Salvatoriello, for the studies he pursued and the studies he neglected, was doomed to do penance by attendance on matins, mass, and vespers in the great church of the Certosa, with pious punctuality during the whole of the ensuing Lent.

It happened that he one day brought with him *by mistake* his bundle of burned sticks, instead of his mother's brazen-clasped missal; and in passing along the magnificent cloisters, sacred alike to religion and the arts, he applied them between the interstices of its Doric columns to the only unoccupied space on the pictured walls, which gold and ultramarine had not yet covered over.

What was the subject which occupied on this occasion his rude pencil, history has not detailed, but he was bringing to his work all the ardour which in another age went to his "Saul" or "Democritus," when unfortunately the prior, issuing with his train from the choir, caught the hapless painter in the very act of scrawling on those sacred walls, which it required all the influence of Spagnuoletto, to get leave to ornament,—walls, whose very angles Annibal Caracci would have been proud to fill, and for whose decoration the great Lanfranco, and greater Domenichino, were actually contending with deadly rivalry and fatal emulation.

The sacrilegious temerity of the boy-artist called for instant and exemplary punishment. Unluckily, too, for the little offender, this happened either in Advent or Lent, the season in which the rules of the rigid Chartreux oblige the prior and *procuratore* to flagellate all the frati,

or lay brothers, of the convent.* They were, therefore, ready armed for their wonted pious discipline when the miserable Salvatoriello fell in their way. Whether he was honoured by the consecrated hand of the prior, or writhed under the scourge of the *procuratore*, does not appear; but that he was chastised with a holy severity, more than proportioned to his crime, is attested by one of the most scrupulous of his biographers, who, though he dwells lightly on the fact, as he does on others of more importance, confesses that from the

* Voltaire alludes to this in his admirable poem, "Sur l'Egalité des Conditions."

"D'un vil froc obscurement couvert,
Recevoir à genoux après laude et matine
De son prieur cloitré vingt coups de discipline."

This flagellation, says the French translation of the rules of the order, "se fait après matines. Les frères de la maison basse sont fouettés par le procureur; ceux de la maison haute par le prieur."

monk's flagellation, "*assai percosse ne riportò*," he "suffered severely."*

A punishment so disproportioned, a persecution so intolerable, did their usual work: genius took its decided bent; and the burned sticks of Salvatoriello sketched the future destiny of Salvator Rosa in lines never to be effaced. The complaints forwarded to the Casa Rosa from the Certosa, and the indignant but impotent rage of the impetuous boy, whose temperament was even then, what he himself afterwards so eloquently described it, "all bile, all spirit, all fire,"† induced his parents to place him beyond the reach of farther temptation, by obtaining his admission into some of the holy congregations, or monastic seminaries, then abounding in Naples. The whole influence and interest of the Rosa family was put into requisition to effect a consumma-

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* Baldinucci.

† Tutto bile, tutto spirito, tutto fuoco.—*Lettera 2da di S. Rosa al' Sign. Dottore Giov. Ricciardi.*

tion so desirable; and the exertions of the parents at last procured for the son the countenance and protection of the reverend fathers of the *Collegio della Congregazione Somasca.**

When the boy Rosa was presented to the rector of the college, that reverend personage probably saw something in the brilliant countenance and awakened intelligence of the young candidate that predisposed him in his favour. Such was the stuff that made statesmen of ecclesiastics, and such were the pupils which the Jesuits selected from their classes to raise the influence of their order and extend its powers: and all priests are, in ambition, Jesuits, whatever title they take, or sect they profess. The name of Rosa, therefore, was without hesitation entered on the list of youthful aspirants who canvassed the protec-

* "Da giovinetto il padre per via di alcuni favori il fece intrare nel collegio della congregazione Somasca," &c.—*Passeri.*

tion of those rich, learned, and rigid disciplinarians, the *Padri Somaschi* of Naples.*

The first migration from home is the first severe trial of human life. The Italians, who are accused of having few domestic virtues, are full of domestic affections. The home of Salvator was not the most congenial, nor the most comfortable; and the ill humour of parental disappointment tended to increase in the truant youth his wandering propensities: still, however, his feelings were fondly and constantly brought back to the haunts of his infancy, as his frequent returns to Naples in after-life sufficiently prove.

The College of the *Congregazione Somasca* occupied one of the streets of the old part of Naples. The distance from Renella was short; yet the monastic seclusion to which he

* The Padri Somaschi belong to an order which takes its name from a town of the Bergomasco, the seat of their first foundation, by "*Il santo e beato Girolamo Miani.*"

was condemned, during the blithest years of his life, rendered his separation from his family an exile. He measured it as young hearts are wont to do, not by space and distance, but by time and privation. The adieus given and received on quitting home were attended by all those expressions of regret which belong to the explosion of Neapolitan feelings; for in Naples none weep silently, and joy and grief are alike vehement and noisy in their exhibition.

In an age and country so marked in all their forms and modes by the picturesque, this departure for the college must have been a scene to paint, rather than to describe. The mind's eye, glancing back to its graphic details, beholds the ardent boy with his singular but beautiful countenance, and light and flexile figure (both models in a maturer age), issuing forth from the old portal of the Casaccia to attend his father to Naples. He is habited in the fantastic costume of the

Neapolitan youth of that day, a doublet and hose, and short mantillo, with a little velvet cap, worn perhaps even then with an *air gaillard*, and a due attention to those black tresses so conspicuous in all his numerous portraits for their beauty and luxuriance. Vito Antonio, on the contrary, at once to shew his loyalty and decayed gentility, affects the fashion of the reigning court mode. For then, as now, all that looked *Italian* was deemed suspicious; and the old *Casacca di cuojo* of Vito, in spite of the rudeness of its material, was doubtless made "Spanish wise" with

Snip and nip, and cut and slish, and slash!

The father and son, as they brush through the vine-tendrils that festoon the portico, are followed beyond its sill by Madonna Giulia and the weeping sisters. The *cornicello* is bestowed to avert an evil eye; and then another, and a *last* "*Addio, carino,*" is given, and the father and son descend the hill of Renella, towards the Strada Infrascata;—the

one, with a bounding step, all emotion;—the other, with a measured pace, all wisdom, pouring on the unattending ear of his pre-occupied companion such "wise saws and modern instances" as might be deemed serviceable to him who for the first time leaves that

"Home, where small experience grows."

In their descent, what a scene developed itself to eyes that saw beauty in nature under all its aspects.

"Hill and dale,
Forest, and field, and flood, temples, and tow'rs,"

too soon to be exchanged for the weary round of cloistered walls! The castellated chimneys of the old Casaccia might still be seen through the dark pines. The figure of Madonna Giulia might still be distinguished by the snow-white head-dress, which, like the bodkins that tressed her daughters' locks, sparkled in the sunshine. As she watches the descent of her son, she offers prayers to the Virgin that he might become, for sanctity and

learning, "*Il miracolo del suo secolo*," (the wonder of his age). Another turn, and the scene shifts. The hum of Naples, the most noisy city in Europe, ascends like the murmuring of Vesuvius on the eve of an explosion. To precipitous declivities, covered with pines and chesnut woods, succeed slopes festooned with trailing vines, throwing their tendrils round every object that could catch or sustain them. Here they obscure, and there they reveal, the deep dark chasm, "shagged with horrid thorn," and riven in the rocky soil by some volcanic convulsion; while fanciful edifices of many terraces, fragments of antique ruins, morsels of friezes and of columns, hillocks of tufo, brown and bare, rise among hanging gardens and groves; and chapels, belfries, shrines, and altars, gleam on every side till the noble Strada Toledo is reached, and its palaces exclude the magic scene, supplanting it by one scarcely less picturesque.

Such was the scenery of the Vomiro in the

beginning of the seventeenth century; such it is now. From this magnificent and spacious quarter of the city of Naples, the two Rosas proceeded to the dark and gloomy part of the Città Vecchia. The portals of the Congregazione Somasca were but too soon reached; the bell is rung, and is answered by a lay brother;—a parental benediction is given, as it is received, with tearful eyes, and the gates of the monastic prison are gratingly closed upon one of the freest spirits that ever submitted to the moral degradation and physical restraint inflicted, in all such seminaries, upon youth and nature.

The first step of a young student's probation in Italy was in that age, as in the present, marked by his assumption of the dress of the congregation into which he was received,—the monkish habit, whose lengthy folds indicate the intellectual feebleness and subjection to which the youthful wearer is predestined. Salvator parted with *his* "customary suit,"

like the shepherd prince of a fairy tale, but "for the nonce," being resolved to resume it on the expiration of his studies; for, from his earliest youth, his aversion to the ecclesiastical condition was fixed and immoveable, and the schemes of parental ambition were as unavailing as they were irrational and short-sighted.

The great secret of genius is its power of concentration,—its faculty of bringing every energy to bear upon a chosen subject; and the most infallible symptom of mediocrity is its tendency to fritter away resources in a variety of pursuits. The zeal which leads to martyrdom is but a type of that ardour of self-devotion which aspires to preeminence; less than *that* never led to immortality in any line. The courses of the Collegio Somasco, which, under the name of "*le lettere humane*," are the first in the series of instruction, seem to have occupied the whole force of Salvator's talent and attention; classical literature was

in deep coincidence with all the instinctive tastes of his ardent temperament: his diligence was intense, and his progress rapid.* —The scenic nature which had hitherto usurped his undivided homage, was now superseded by that intellectual world which burst upon his developed faculties, creating new associations, and engendering more elevated ideas than his wanderings round Pausilippo and Baiæ had yet awakened.† If, in his monastic durance, he sometimes sighed to visit the haunts of his childhood, it was most probably not without the purpose of beholding them by the light of memory and imagination, as the sites once peopled by all

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* "Col progresso del tempo trascorse tutto lo studio della grammatica, si avanzò alla rhetorica, e giunse ai principj della logica ove *fermossi*."—*Salvator Rosa, pittore e poeta.*

† "Studiò da giovinetto l'umanità e la rhetorica nel Collegio Somasco," &c. &c.—*Pascoli, Vita di Salv. Rosa.*

that warms the painter's vision or the poet's dream. Then it was that he knew, in the lakes of his childhood, the Avernus and the Acheron of Homer; and saw, in the stunted underwoods which had sheltered his truant head from parental search, the groves where Virgil sent Æneas to seek his golden branch. The grotto which had many a time screened his fervid brow from the noontide ardour of a Neapolitan sun, he now might desire to behold as the vaults which had once re-echoed to the oracles of the Cumean Sibyl; and the ruins so unconsciously sketched with his burned sticks,

"Le colonne spezzate ed i rotti marmi," *(S. Rosa.)*

might now promise him additional delight, as the remnants of those voluptuous villas where Lucullus held his orgies with Horace, or as the spot where Cicero, amidst Falernian vineyards, composed his academic questions.

It was at this tranquil, studious, and ideal epoch of life,—when the passions are still in abeyance, when fancy, bright and unsullied, throws its brilliant halo on every object, and impressions of human grandeur and human virtue are received with more graciousness than accuracy,—that Salvator Rosa is supposed to have laid in that vast stock of classical erudition, and to have acquired that taste for the works of the ancients, which, at a remoter period, formed the inspiration of his works as poet and as painter. It was then he committed to his capacious memory that vast store of antique lore, which diffused an elegant and classical character over his greater pictures and graver poems, and which so curiously and so strongly contrast these productions with those lighter and more fantastic productions of his pen and his pencil, which now place him at the head of the "Romantic" school of Italy, a

worthy associate with Shakspeare and with Byron.*

When, however, he had reached the very *acmé* of his classical enthusiasm, when men and manners, and events and deeds, all belonging to the most stirring times and brilliant æras of society, were occupying his thoughts and giving an heroical elevation to his principles, the moment arrived which was to carry him from studies thus congenial and bewitching. The rigid rules of college formalities cut him short in that golden career, from which "fate and metaphysical aid" were invoked to withdraw him.

He was now obliged to pass, by a violent transition, from the harmonizing humanities, to a barbarous and sophistical philosophy. Quibbles and quiddities replaced the sublimity

* The opposite extremes of his versatility will be found in his "Regulus," and his "Banditti," his "Babilonia," and his "Incantation."

of Homer and the wit of Horace; Virgil retreated before Johannes Scotus; and Sallust and Cicero, having imprinted the graphic imagery of the "Catiline conspiracy" on a mind destined to reproduce it with new features of terror and danger, were banished to make way for the syllogisms of Chrysostom Javello, and the eternal commentaries of Dominick Soto on the text of the eternal Aristotle. Barbara and Baralipton were now thundered upon ears made up to the melody of Ovid and Sannazzaro; and the ticklish doubts of Averroes were offered to a mind whose own were already of a much more deep and perilous character. The transition from poetry to logic, from all that brightens the imagination to all that could cloud the intellect, was too violent to be effectual. It was throwing a cart-harness on the back of a war-horse while the trumpet sounded a charge. The ardent spirit and strong volition of the student resisted the tyranny of this absurd

domination over mind and talent. "*Giunse ai principj della logica ove fermossi.*" "Arrived at the first principles of logic, *he stopped short*," says one of his laconic biographers; and it appears that neither punishment nor reward could induce him to encumber his memory with the futilities which then served, with other causes, to retrograde illumination and obstruct the genuine sources of useful knowledge.

A more unlucky moment for an obstinate resistance to this long-venerated and long-established system could scarcely be chosen by the most daring innovator; for it was offered at that precise time when Italy (once the cradle* of philosophy, as of all the sciences

* To Italy philosophy is indebted for Frà Tommaso of Naples, the Swift of his day (the thirteenth century), an high churchman in religion, but in politics a liberal; whose writings are said to have supplied questions which have filled the pages of divines even of the Reformed Church:—for Pietro Pomponazzo, the Locke

and all the arts) was the last asylum of that barbarous dialectic, which upheld and decorated all the theological and (in them included) all the political sophisms which enslaved mankind. The creeds of Aristotle and

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of the fourteenth century, whose work on the immortality of the soul drew down upon the book and its author the persecution of the Church:—and for Father Anselmo, a Piedmontese of the same epoch, in whose philosophy may be found the whole system of Kant,* that high-priest of metaphysical subtilty, whose unintelligible language has betrayed many of his *would-be* disciples, male and female, into an affected imitation, which has covered them with a "*ridicule ineffaçable.*"—See *Buhl's Histoire de la Philos. Moderne.*

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* "*Entendez-vous quelque chose de Kant,*" said Napoleon one day to a Genevese metaphysician.—"*Non, Sire,*" was the reply.—"*J'en suis enchanté,*" returned the Emperor; "*ni moi non plus.*" The false refinements of this philosophy could never withstand the precision and clearness of the French language; and it accordingly made no ground in France. The Institute, in speaking of the system of Kant, and of those which have sprung from it among his disciples and successors, observes,

of St. Athanasius were alike in exclusive possession of every orthodox mind, as they had been for many centuries; and Christian monks, and monkish laics reared in their seminaries, were the zealous disciples of the heathen philosopher. However much particular sects might differ upon their knotty futilities, they were all, Scotists and Thomists, in accordance to coerce the human understanding, to blend scholastic metaphysics with church mysteries, and to defend the unintelligible dogmas of the one by the in-

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"Pour nous, nous ne pouvons y voir que le renversement de toutes les méthodes d'une saine philosophie, et la source des plus dangereux écarts.....Ils peuvent séduire, dans les universités, quelques têtes ardentes et ambitieuses, entraînées par l'espoir d'obtenir à l'aide d'une espèce de divination les lumières qui ne peuvent être que le fruit de l'étude, ou trop sensibles au frivole orgueil d'engendrer la science avec les seules combinaisons de leur esprit: mais les hommes sages et éclairés de l'Allemagne se sont réunis pour censurer de tels égaremens et en déplorer les abris."—*Rapport de l'Institut presenté à sa Majesté l'Empereur et Roi.*

comprehensible quibbles of the other. It is lamentable to reflect through how many ages this venerated farrago of subtilties occupied all the powers of intellect: but church and state stood sentinels at the outposts of the system, to guard its sophisms and protect its absurdities; and persecution or death,—the dungeon, the galley, or the pile,—awaited the daring innovator who doubted a miracle by the Madonna, or denied a proposition of the Stagyrite.

The Reformation, however, aimed a blow at this antiquated tyranny, from which St. Peter and his coadjutor *Aristotle* never recovered. When such powerful assailants as Erasmus and Melancthon, Luther and Laurentius Valla, took the field, it was time once more to unfurl the threadbare banners of St. Thomas, and to erect the more ancient standard of Bonaventure. In France, in Spain, and the Low Countries, the war of the dialecticians was literally a war of death; and

logicians fought with other weapons than syllogisms and hypotheses, until the "holy text of pike and gun" decided controversies which could not be settled by less infallible authority. In the beginning of the seventeenth century the contest was carried on with such ferocity between the old and the new scholastics, that the slightest heresy in philosophy was a penal offence in the colleges of Italy; yet it was at this precise period, that a youth (received, as it appears, upon the charity of the institution) neglected the study or disputed the truth of those doctrines, by which all such institutions were then striving to protract their existence, and preserve their influence.

Under what circumstances Salvator divorced himself from these fatiguing and disgusting studies does not appear. The partiality of his biographers, or their ignorance of this part of his life, passes lightly over the event. Thus much is evident, that he was sent from

the Collegio Somasco before his studies were completed: but, though most probably expelled for dulness or for contumacy, all the chroniclers who have noticed this incident in the life of the painter-poet ascribe his failure in philosophy, after his brilliant successes in the *Lettere Umane*, to a new and ardent passion for a science of a very different nature; and state that, *instead* of the dialectic exercises, he applied to the study of music, and to play upon a variety of instruments.*

The luckless boy, for he was still a boy, issued forth from his (by no means) *alma mater*, with a heart much lighter probably than he entered it; and, in spite of his disgrace, with a mind stored with the treasures of antiquity.† He was returning, indeed,

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* "Comecche l'esercitazioni diallettiche non punto andavangli a genio, s'attenne in quella vece ad imperare la musica ed il suono de varj istromenti."—*Vita, &c.*

† Almost at the same time Milton, if not expelled, at least incurred rustication, &c. at Cambridge, for his sup-

to an indigent home, and to encounter the peevish reproaches of parents whose views he was compelled to thwart, but whose name he was destined to immortalize. He had left, however, philosophy behind him, and had bid "a long and a careless adieu" to syllogisms and their modes. His head was full of the sweet melodies of Leonardo Primavera, and the elegant madrigals of Luzzaschi. His heart was opening to feelings which, while they last, deify their possessor. The "*sito incantato*" of his native paradise was open once more to his wanderings, under more consecrated impressions than those with which he had hitherto visited them. He had all the temperament and all the precocity of an Italian; and, though but sixteen, the brilliant

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posed hostility to reigning dogmas; and his complaints while at the university, that he was weary of enduring "the threats of a rigorous master,' and something else which *a temper like his could not undergo*," recall the impetuous character and temperament of Salvator Rosa.

elements of the poet, painter, and musician were vaguely and deliciously operating within him. Life was a brilliant illusion; and even the positive ills of domestic misery could scarcely dispel the benign dream, or cloud its radiance. With such feelings and in such dispositions, the expelled student of the Padri Somaschi ascended the hill of Renella, and presented himself at the portico of the old Casaccia, in all the bloom of adolescence, and probably with all the timidity of one under the ban of parental displeasure—the prodigal son of the *famiglia Rosa!*

CHAPTER III.

Salvator studies Music scientifically—State of Music at that period in Italy—Flourishes in Naples—Salvator's Lyrics—Judgment of a foreign Critic—Specimen of his amatory poetry—Marriage of his eldest sister with Francesco Francanzani the painter — Salvator commences painting in the work-room of Francanzani—*Giro* of the Italian painters — Salvator leaves Naples and strikes out a new course of study for himself — His wanderings in Apulia, Calabria, and the Abruzzi—Character of these regions, and of their inhabitants—Description of the Banditti of the Abruzzi in the Seventeenth Century—Their power and influence—Salvator becomes associated with one of their bands—The influence of this event on his genius and works — Salvator returns to Naples — The misery and indigence of his family—Efforts to succour them unavailing — Death of his Father — He works at the lowest prices for the *Revenditori* of Naples—State of the Neapolitan School at that epoch

—A School of mannerists—Caravaggio, his singular character and story—His influence on the Neapolitan School—His disciples *Giuseppe Ribera* (lo Spagnuoletto) and his associates Corenzio and Caracciolo—School of Spagnuoletto, a ferocious faction —Its persecution of the great Roman masters, particularly Guido and Dominichino, when invited by the *Cavalieri Deputati* to paint the Duomo—Arrival of the celebrated Lanfranco in Naples—He unites all suffrages—His letter—His admiration of the picture of *Hagar in the Desert*, by Salvator, which he purchases—Introduction of Salvator to Ancillo Falconi—Studies in his School—Unable to procure work —His sufferings and despondency.

MUSIC, the true language of passion, which speaks so powerfully, and yet so mysteriously, to senses organized for its reception, awakening our earliest and perhaps our latest sensations of pleasure,—Music at this period of Salvator's life appears to have engrossed his undivided attention;* and the authorities

* The writer of the article "ROSA" in the Encyclopædia Britannica, in alluding to the English public

which he afterwards produced to sanction its pursuit, shew with what earnestness, and upon what philosophical principles, he cultivated the science.* In the beginning of the

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having first become acquainted with Salvator Rosa's musical talents through the researches of the late learned and excellent Dr. Burney, observes, "From the specimens given in the History of Music of his compositions, we have no scruple of declaring that he had a truer genius for this science in point of melody, than any of his predecessors or contemporaries."

* Salvator when he attacks the purposes to which music was put by the Church, and by the princes of Italy, introduces authorities for his own devotion to the art in the example of many philosophers and sages:

"Io non biasimo già l'arte del canto,
Ma sì bene i cantori viziosi,
Ch' hanno sporcato all' modestia il manto.
Si ben, ch' era mestier da virtuosi
La musica una volta; e l' imparavano
Tra gli uomini i più grandi o i più famosi.
So che Davidde e Socrate cantavano
E che l'Arcade, il Greco, e lo Spartano

seventeenth century, music in Italy was rapidly succeeding in the public taste to painting; and (already taken into the schemes of Italian diplomacy) it was applied to the enervation and debasement of the people. Music could instil no treason, preach no heresy: unlike poetry it could be cultivated without offence to the Inquisition. If the man "who has no music in his soul" be a fit instrument for "plots and stratagems," he whose ear was peculiarly organized for the reception of sweet sounds, and who surrendered himself to a passion rendered popular alike by nature and by vogue, was already more than half-disarmed, as a stern reasoner or an inflexible patriot. It was in Naples that the great school of ancient counterpoint, "the sophistry

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D'ogni altra scienza al par, la celebravano.
E Temistocle già l'Eroe sovrano
Fu stimato assai men d'Epaminonda,
Per non saper cantar come il Tebano."

Satire,—La Musica.

of canons," had been founded on the revival of the art; but in the sixteenth century the pedantry of crude harmonies, the dry and geometrical modulations which were worked like a problem in the mathematics, and were gracious only to senses callous to the "natural concord of sweet sounds," were gradually yielding to a novel style of composition, expressively called "*La musica parlante.*" Those flowing lyric melodies, which, by the name of *cantata,* succeeded to the intricate madrigal, were soon discovered by the sensitive Italians to be

"*Il cantar che nel animo si sente.*"*

The first secular music in parts consisted of harmonies adapted to rustic and street-ballads, such as were sung and played in Naples and its adjacent towns and villages; and the "*villanelle arie,*" and "*canzonette alla Napolitana,*" were as popular at the latter end of the sixteenth century throughout the Continent, as the Venetian ballad and Pro-

* That music which is felt in the very soul.

vençal *vaudeville* were towards the end of the seventeenth.

All Naples (where even to this day love and melody make a part of the existence of the people), all Naples was then resounding to guitars, lutes, and harps, accompanying voices, which for ever sang the fashionable *canzoni* of Cambio Donato and of the Prince di Venusa.* Neither German phlegm nor Spanish gloom could subdue spirits so tuned to harmony, nor silence the passionate *serenatas* which floated along the shores, and reverberated among the classic grottoes of Pausilippo. Vesuvius blazed, St. Elmo thun-

* Evelyn, who visited Naples about this time, observes that "the country-people are so jovial and so addicted to music, that the very husbandmen almost universally play on the guitar, singing and accompanying songs in praise of their sweethearts, and will commonly go to the field with their fiddle. They are merry, witty, and genial, all of which I attribute to their ayre."—*Mem. Vol. I.*

dered from its heights, conspiracy brooded in the caves of Baiæ, and tyranny tortured its victim in the dungeons of the Castello Nuovo; yet still the ardent Neapolitans, amidst all the horrors of their social and political position, could snatch moments of blessed forgetfulness; and, reckless of their country's woes and their own degradation, could give up hours to love and music, which were already numbered in the death-warrants of their tyrants. It was at this period the policy of the Italian governments to steep the senses of the abused people in the soft oblivion of voluptuous and debasing pleasures; to substitute for liberty and independence, and for all the lofty aspirations of noble spirits, the seduction of sybarite indulgence; and to enchain the energies of the citizen by habits of frivolous amusement and vicious excess. A Spanish viceroy might then in Naples (as a reigning monarch has elsewhere been wont to do) sign at the same moment an order

for an execution and for a court-ball; and, while the patriots of the land he misruled were chained in the galleys, or died the slow death of the *carcere duro*, could lead a procession in honour of the Madonna, or grace a midnight masque* amidst a corrupt and a bigoted court: for the means and resources of despotism, though fearful, are few; and the Bourbons of France, Spain, and Naples, in the present day, have only re-acted the parts of their ferocious and superstitious predecessors in ruder and remoter ages.

It was at this moment, when peculiar circumstances were awakening in the region of the syrens "the hidden soul of harmony,"

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* "E cresciuti così sono i suoi pregi
Che per le Reggie serpe, e si distende
L'arte de questi Pantomimi egregi.
Alla musica in Corte ognuno attende:
Do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, canta che sale,
La, sol, fa, mi, re, do, canta che scende."
Satire—La Musica.

when the most beautiful women of the capital and the court gave a public exhibition of their talents and their charms, and glided in their feluccas on the moonlight midnight seas, with harps of gold and hands of snow,* that the contumacious student of the *Padri Somaschi* escaped from the restraints of their cloister, and the horrid howl of their *laude spirituali*, to all the intoxication of sound and sight, with every sense in full accordance with the musical passion of the day. It is little wonderful if, at this epoch of his life, Salvator

* "Among the women were the Signorine Leonora and Caterina, who were never heard but with rapture (says Della Valle, a contemporary of Salvator, in speaking of the female musicians of this time) particularly the elder, who accompanied herself on the arch lute. I remember their mother in her youth, when she sailed in her felucca near the grotto of Pausilippo, with her golden harp in her hand; but in our times these shores were inhabited by syrens, not only beautiful and tuneful, but virtuous and beneficent."

gave himself up unresistingly to the pursuit of a science which he cultivated with ardour, even when time had preached his tumultuous pulse to rest; or if the floating capital of genius, which was as yet unappropriated, was in part applied to that species of composition which in the youth of man, as of nations, precedes deeper and more important studies, and for which, in either, there is but one age. All poetry and passion, his young muse "dallied with the innocence of love;" and inspired strains, which, though the simple breathings of an ardent temperament, the exuberance of youthful excitement, and an overteeming sensibility, were assigning him a place among the first Italian lyrists of his age. Little did he then dream that posterity would apply the rigid rules of criticism to the "idle visions" of his boyish fancy; or that his bars and basses would be conned and analysed by the learned umpires of future ages,—declared, "not only admirable

for a *dilettante*," but "in point of melody superior to that of most of the masters of his time."*

His musical productions became so popular that the "*spinners and knitters in the sun did use to chaunt them*" (an image which every street in Naples during the winter season daily exhibits); and there was in some of these short lyric poems, which he set to

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* Burney's History of Music.—Of Salvator's Lyrics, Pasteri observes, that he had "lasciato correre in giro, alcuni suoi scherzi per musica, di varie idee, per lo più morale ed alcune tragiche, con un stilo facile, dolce e corrente, adattato alla proprietà del canto."

None of his poetry is dated; but there is internal evidence, in some of the pieces found in his music-book by Dr. Burney, of their being the effusions of a very youthful genius. Such are his Sonnet,

"Star vicino al bel idol mio,"

and

"Più che penso a tuoi," &c.

See Burney's Hist. of Music.

music, a softness and delicacy that rendered them even worthy to be sung

"By some fair queen in summer bower
With ravishing divisions of her lute";*

still, however, they are more curious as compared to that stern strain of sharp invective, which runs through all his maturer compositions, and to that dark, deep, and indignant feeling which pervades all his satires. In mature life he may, and doubtless did, look back with a sort of melancholy envy upon the gracious emotions and brilliant illusions from which such strains arose; and (with that

* The following is a perfect anticipation of Metastasio, and out of the reigning mode of *Concetti* introduced by Marini:—

"Dolce pace del cor mio
Dove sei? che ti rubato?
Dimmi almen qual fato reo
Fuor del seno discaccia?
Quando usciste del mio petto
Ove andaste? Entro qual sen?
Torna a me, che alcun diletto
Senza te goder non so."

mingled sentiment of regret and contempt, which is assuredly felt by all, who, having written when young, revert in a more advanced age to their early compositions,) he may have given a sad smile to those idle dreams which time had long dissipated;—apostrophizing with Petrarch his first and fond effusions, the

> "Dolci rime leggiadre
> Che nel primiero assalto
> D'amor usai, quand' io ebbi non altri armi."

It is pleasant, however, ere time and experience had done their work, and turned the excess of an almost morbid sensibility to a far different account, to pause for a moment, and to contemplate the youth of genius,—the most splendid aspect of human life,—in the full, but fragile enjoyment of its own brief and illusory existence. The clime, the scene, the population, and reigning manners of Naples, were but too favourable to that intoxicating state of excitement, which in all regions characterises the adolescence of highly

organised beings; and but too many mortal Parthenopes *then* recalled the ancient haunts of Circe and the Syrens; explaining, if they did not excuse, those aberrations from the strict rules of prudence, which the enemies of Salvator Rosa have magnified into systematic libertinism.

He who has asserted that "the arts of painting, poetry, and music, are inseparable," because, perhaps, they were all united in his own person, had as yet only applied with diligence to the latter. Having acquired considerable mastery on the lute (for which, like Petrarch, he preserved a passion till the last year of his life), he soon became one of the most brilliant and successful serenaders of Naples. Many of those gay and *gaillard* figures* which in after-life escaped from his

* His figure (says Passeri) had, in all its movements, "qualche sveltezza e leggiadria,"—something agile and elegant.

graphic pencil and rapid graver, with hair and feather floating in the breeze, are said to have been but copies of himself, as he stood niched under the shadow of a balcony, or reclined on the prow of a felucca, singing to his lute the charms or cruelty of some listening Irene or Cloris* of the moment.

But the talents and graces which abroad may have brought captivity to so many hearts, at home produced nothing but remonstrances and grievous disappointment. To his father and mother it was despair to find all their speculations frustrated, all their anticipations blasted, and to behold those powers, which they had destined to the exclusive service of the Madonna, lavished on the mortal charms of some "*gentile donzella*," whose

"Dolce sorriso
Soavi parolette accorte"

* The heroines of his lyrics.

would be the only recompense of talents so profanely misapplied. Not only did they deem the vocation of their son a sort of heresy, but the *cantata di camera*, the new secular music of the day, a profane sacrilege. Unaccustomed in their youth to go beyond a *madriale*, or hymn to the "Blessed Mother," the sin of innovation was in their eyes added to that of disobedience. Their parental ambition, however, had not reached "the head and front" of disappointment,—for Il Salvatoriello was not yet a *painter!*

It happened at this careless, gay, but not idle period of Salvator's life, that an event occurred which hurried on his vocation to that art, to which his parents were so determined that he should not addict himself, but to which Nature had so powerfully directed him. His probation of adolescence was passed: his hour was come; and he was about to approach that temple, whose threshold he

modestly and poetically declared himself unworthy to pass,—*

" Del immortalitade al tempio augusto
Dove serba la gloria e i suoi tesori."

At one of the popular festivities annually celebrated at Naples in honour of the Madonna, the beauty of Rosa's elder sister captivated the attention of a young painter, who, though through life unknown to "fortune," was not even then "unknown to fame." The celebrated and unfortunate Francesco Francanzani, the innamorato of La Signorina Rosa, was a distinguished pupil of the Spagnuoletto school, and his picture of San

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" Io che la soglia non osai passare
Con la penna e el pennello il proprio nome
M' inchinava a segnar sul liminare."—*L'Invidia.*

The whole of his description of the temple of Fame, in his "*Invidia*," is full of poetical beauty; and his description of Night is so graphic, that he possibly painted before he wrote it.

Giuseppe for the Chiesa Pellegrini had already established him as one of the first painters of his day. Francanzani, like most of the young Neapolitan painters of his time, was a turbulent and factious character, vain and self-opinionated; and though there was in his works a certain grandeur of style, with great force and depth of colouring, yet the impatience of his disappointed ambition, and indignation at the neglect of his acknowledged merit, already rendered him reckless of public opinion.

It was the peculiar vanity of the painters of that day to have beautiful wives. Albano had set the example; Dominichino had followed it to his cost; Rubens turned it to the account of his profession; and Francanzani, still poor and struggling, married the portionless daughter of the most indigent artist in Naples, and thought perhaps more of the model than the wife. This union, and still more, a certain sympathy in talent

and character between the brothers-in-law, frequently carried Salvator to the *stanza* or workroom of Francesco. Francesco, by some years the elder, was then deep in the faction and intrigues of the Neapolitan school; and was endowed with that bold eloquence which, displayed upon bold occasions, is always so captivating to young auditors. It was at the foot of this kinsman's easel, and listening to details which laid, perhaps, the foundation of that contemptuous opinion he cherished through life for schools, academies, and all incorporated pedantry and pretension, that Salvator occasionally amused himself in copying, on any scrap of board or paper which fell in his way, whatever pleased him in Francesco's pictures. His long-latent genius thus accidentally awakened, resembled the *acqua buja*, whose cold and placid surface kindles like spirits on the contact of a spark. In these first, rude, and hasty sketches, Francanzani, as Passeri informs us, saw "*molti segni d' un indole*

spiritosa," (" great signs of talent and genius"), and he frequently encouraged, and sometimes corrected the copies, which so nearly approached the originals.* But Salvator, who was destined to imitate none, but to be imitated by many, soon grew impatient of repeating another's conceptions, and of

* Although it is hinted by some of his biographers, that Salvator studied under his maternal uncle, Paolo Grecco, " principiò a farsi istruire con regola da Paolo Grecco suo zio materno" *(Vita de S. Rosa)*, yet the tame manner of his relation must rather have disgusted him with the art than encouraged its pursuit: and the more respectable authorities make no mention of this circumstance. On the authority of Pascoli, it appears that he not only studied painting, but that he resumed his literary pursuits under the roof of his brother-in-law; for he observes, in speaking of his devotion to painting and letters, that, at this period, " proseguiva egli con egual attenzione l'uno e l'altro studio." The "*idleness*" attributed to S. Rosa is among the most obvious calumnies directed by party-spirit even in the present day against this libelled *liberale* of the seventeenth century.

following in an art in which he already perhaps felt, with prophetic throes, that he was born to lead. His visits to the workshop of Francanzani grew less frequent; his days were given to the scenes of his infant wanderings; he departed with the dawn, laden with his portfolio filled with primed paper, and a pallet covered with oil-colours: and it is said that even then he not only sketched, but coloured from nature *(dal naturale*)*. When the pedantry of criticism (at the suggestion of envious rivals) accused him of having acquired, in his colouring, too much of the *impasto* of the *Spagnuoletto* school, it was not aware that his faults, like his beauties, were original; and that he sinned against the rules of art only because he adhered too faithfully to nature. Returning from these arduous but not profitless rambles, through wildernesses and along precipices impervious to all, save the

* Passeri.

enterprise of fearless genius, he sought shelter beneath his sister's roof, where a kinder welcome awaited him than he could find in that home where it had been decreed from his birth that *he should not be a painter.*

Francanzani was wont, on the arrival of his brother-in-law, to rifle the contents of his portfolio; and he frequently found there compositions hastily thrown together, but selected, drawn, and coloured with a boldness and a breadth which indicated the confidence of a genius sure of itself. The first accents of the "thrilling melody of sweet renown", which ever vibrated to the heart of Salvator, came to his ear on these occasions in the Neapolitan *patois* of his relation, who, in glancing by lamplight over his labours, would pat him smilingly on the head, and exclaim,* "*Fruscia, fruscia, Salvatoriello—che va buono:*"—simple plaudits! but frequently remembered in after-times,

* "Go on, go on, (or literally, rub on,)—this is good."

(when the dome of the Pantheon had already rung with the admiration extorted by his Regulus,) as the first which cheered him in his arduous progress.

Since the great schools of Tuscany, Rome, and Lombardy had been established, or rather, since certain peculiarities in the works of men of supereminent genius had grown into precedents, and supplied examples, which pedants took for rules, it had been the fashion for all aspirants in the art to make what *they* called their *giro;* and having run through Italy, and

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* The ambition of Francanzani for his brother-in-law went no farther at this period than to enable the indigent boy to earn wherewith to "feed and clothe himself." "Perche," says Pascoli, "oltre all' essergli maestro, gli era anche cognato, bramava che guadagnasse tanto almen col pennella che gli bastasse per lo vitto e pel vestito."—"For besides that he was his master, he was his brother-in-law, and he was desirous that he (Salvator) should at least earn by his pencil as much as might procure him clothes and sustenance."

studied or worked in the galleries, churches, or *stanze* of the eminent masters in Rome, Milan, Florence, and Venice, they returned to their place of permanent sojourn, pursuing the line and adopting the *manner* of some admired and chosen chief, whom chance or coincidence of taste had rendered the "god of their idolatry." Originality was rare; it stamped the supremacy of the few, and left the many to earn such inferior honours as might be attained by a happy adoption of the technically styled *maniera Raphaelesca*, *Corregesca*, or *Titianesca*, terms referring to men whose very errors had become precedents, and whose merits had assumed a character of almost divine authority.

To Salvator Rosa, who had now adopted painting as a profession, the beaten track lay broadly open; but that there *was a track*, and that a beaten one, was enough to deter him from entering upon it. In his wayward and original mood he left to tamer talent, and more regulated feelings, the hackneyed routine

of academies and work-rooms; and striking into a line which no example justified, no precedent recommended, he betook himself to *that* school where no master lays down the law to aspiring genius, no pupil follows servilely his paralysing dictates;—the school of Nature!

Parental authority now in vain opposed itself to a vocation which made a part of constitutional temperament. Obstacles became stimulants, difficulties served but "*to bind up each corporal faculty*" to the cherished purpose; and the young enthusiast, no better accommodated than the pious pilgrim whose scrip and staff make up his whole travelling equipage, set forth upon *his* giro, animated by that zeal which leads to the great truths of scenic, as of moral nature, and flushed with that ardour without which there is no genius, no success!

The steps of Salvator were now directed to those wild but splendid regions of his own country, which modern art had not yet violated. Full of difficulty and peril, they might

be deemed impervious to mediocrity; but they were alluring to one, who, lonely and proud in spirit, could find in the trackless solitudes of Nature, magnificent and endless combinations of the sublime and the terrific, well suited to satisfy an imagination vehement and pregnant with volition, which could not relish nor endure the insipidities and restraints of conventional forms,—an imagination, which "man delighted not," and to which the *works* of man afforded not a sufficient excitement.* Salvator Rosa is supposed to have been in his

* "Salvator Rosa," says Sir J. Reynolds, "saw the necessity of trying some new source of pleasing the public in his works. The world were tired of Claude Lorraine's and G. Poussin's long train of imitators."

"Salvator therefore struck into a wild, savage kind of Nature, which was new and striking."

The first of these paragraphs contains a strange anachronism. When Salvator *struck into a new line*, Poussin and Claude, who, though his elders, were his contemporaries, had as yet no train of imitators. The one was struggling for a livelihood in France, the other was

eighteenth year, when, issuing forth with the dawn of a spring morning (an hour and a season finely adapted to his age and enterprise), he began his *giro*, and for the first time bade farewell to his native Naples. In proceeding under the Pizzafalcone to the Porta Capuana, his point of egress from his brother-in-law's residence, he must have passed by the Palazzo Reale, the then newly-erected residence of the Spanish viceroy. There, under golden domes, slumbered at that early hour the puissant and favourite court-painter Spagnuoletto; while his numerous *Sequaci*, at once servile and factious,

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cooking and grinding colours for his master at Rome. Salvator's early attachment to Nature in her least imitated forms, was not the result of speculation having any reference to the public: it was the operation of original genius, and of those particular tendencies which seemed to be breathed into his soul at the moment it first quickened. From his cradle to his tomb he was the creature of impulse, and the slave of his own vehement volitions.

filled his anteroom, and waited for the master order that dictated their daily work in the corridors of palaces and the choirs of churches. Salvator *may* too have passed that sumptuous dwelling provided in the Episcopal palace by the *Cavalieri deputati* of the cathedral of Saint Januarius, for the great and persecuted Domenichino, when haply even at that moment the sublimest painter of the age may have dreamt of the dagger of Lanfranco, or the poison-cup of Ribera, of which, when awake, he lived in perpetual and nervous apprehension.*

The young artist, in flying from the vices and crimes of the *social order* of *that* day, which under the influence of particular circumstances invaded even the tranquillity of the humanizing arts, may have felt proud and elated in the consciousness of the career he had struck out for himself, which left him free and unshackled in

* Domenichino when at Naples lived in daily dread of assassination by his professional rivals.

his high calling, alike remote from the degrading distinctions of patronage and the persecuting malice of envy.

Although nearly all his biographers have alluded to this early and singular *giro*, yet few of its positive details have been preserved. It appears, however, from the *portrait*-scenes preserved in his singular landscapes, of marine views, headlands, castellated rocks, antique ruins, and savage coasts, identified by some particular and authenticated feature, as well as from the physiognomy and costume of his beautiful little groups, known by the name of his "*figurine*," that he must have traversed and studied much among the wild and sublime scenery of La Basilicata*, La Puglia, and Calabria, the

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* Pascoli, who supposes it was by the advice of his brother-in-law that he made this *giro*, observes, "Depingere gli faceva, le vedute più belle di quel bellissimo sito, cosi s' ando per alcun tempo istruendo e mantenendo," &c.—*Vita di S. Rosa.*

Magna Græcia of the ancients: and it is probable, too, that he was led to this marine circuit (then untouched and unstudied) by those classic associations which distinguish all his compositions, whether of the pencil or the pen. Nearly the whole of the Greek colonies had been confined to these romantic coasts, which still preserve vestiges of, the brilliant population that once was spread over them. But if even Cicero in his time could exclaim, "*Magna Græcia nunc non est*," the desolation which in the days of Salvator brooded over that terrestrial Eden, was of a yet deeper and sadder character. All, however, that these once flourishing regions had lost, (the bustle of their commercial ports, and the splendour of their philosophical schools,) was redeemed in the imagination of the young poet-painter, the boy philosopher, by the magnificent desolation and melancholy grandeur that remained; while to the monuments of empires past away, and the beauties of art, still visible in ruins conse-

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crated by the touch of time and marked by the flight of ages, were contrasted the grotesque and curious groupings of a living age, with all the picturesque forms of existing religious institutions and new political combinations, which though thinly scattered over a vast and diversified surface, came forth in a vigorous and striking relief.

Such was the imagery which, with a force that vibrated to the last hour of life, agitated a mind alive to all that is elevated and sublime, and operated on a fancy eager for the strongest and strangest excitements. Such were the subjects of Salvator's early studies, such the models of untouched sublimity, which enabled him to start forward an original master, at an epoch when every possible mode of originality appeared to have been exhausted. The countless landscapes now so widely scattered throughout the civilized world, and so highly prized in all its countries, are either portraits of scenes sketched at this period, or treasured in a memory singularly tenacious and retentive. Some

represent the savage valleys which lie spread at the foot of *Monte Sarchio* (the first stage of his wanderings), with all their volcanic remains, their surfaces of pumice and tufo, and screen of bleached calcareous hills; others represent fragments of the classic ruins of Beneventum, its noble arch and amphitheatre; others, exhibiting only undulating and sterile mounds and some formless ruins, preserve the characteristic features of the ancient Eclano*: while a dark and desolate plain, dimly lighted by the livid flashes of a turbulent and stormy sky, retraces what was once the site of seductions which Hannibal found more irresistible than the Roman legions. It was at this period that Salvator probably sketched the "*prima intenzione*" of his great picture of "Democritus," or philosophy smiling amidst death and corruption, at the ambitious projects and final destiny of man. His

* "Il ne reste de cette ancienne ville que quelques débris de murailles, sans forme, et un fragment de quelque edifice auquel on ne sait quel nom donner," &c.—*St. Non.*

scene was the site of a once superb and luxurious city; his Democritus was himself; and the moral of his picture, the simple result of his own melancholy reflections, as he leant on the tomb of the freedman of Saturninus, and sketched the ruins of that Cannæ whose splendid palaces and voluptuous population were now only represented by tombs and funeral inscriptions.*

The subjects which presented themselves in the course of his wanderings through *La Puglia* and along the shores of the Adriatic, and which in detached features so frequently appear in his works, were, the headlands and castellated rocks of Monte Gargano†; the romantic port of Bari; the sea-lashed cliffs of San Vito, with their fortress-monastery and embattled cloisters, manned by warlike monks, living in constant hostility to the Barbary corsairs; the grottoes of Palignano, looking like the submarine palace of some ocean deity; the Canusium and Brundusium of Horace; and the wizard

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* Voyage Pittoresque.—*St. Non.* † In La Puglia.

caverns of Otranto, described by Pliny, and worthy of the incantations of "*the Maga*" *of the Capitol*, the first idea of which probably suggested itself to the imagination of the wandering painter amidst scenes admirably consonant to visions so wild. The neighbourhoods of Pæstum and of Salernum are still marked as the frequent and favourite haunts of Salvator; and he is said to have reproduced in numerous *replicos*, the scenery of *La Cava**, a site full of savage sublimity and of noble recollections, consecrated alike to religion and to liberty.

It is, however, both biographically and traditionally asserted, that the mountains of the Abruzzi and Calabria, (the most savage and elevated of the Apennines,) commanding on either side views of the Adriatic and Mediterranean, detained for the longest period his pil-

* St. Non, in observing that it was among the solitudes of *La Cava* Salvator Rosa sought for models of "*le genre grand, noble, et sévère*," terms it himself "*ce triste desert.*"

grim steps. The curious antique towns, sheltered among their cliffs, sometimes raising their fantastic edifices in the bosom of an extinct volcano, sometimes perched on the almost inaccessible pinnacle of a frightful rock, and inhabited by beings full of the restless energy and uncompromising independence which form the moral attributes of mountainous regions, must have possessed a singular charm to one who presented in his own temperament and character the very abstraction of all such qualities. In these remote and elevated sites, the old spirit of the Greek colonies was far from extinct; and at the period when Salvator visited them, that singular conspiracy was brooding, which was soon afterwards organized, for the purpose of separating Calabria from the Austro-Spanish dominions in Naples, and of founding, or rather restoring, the republic which had flourished under the first Greek colonists.* There the

* The principal conspirators were the celebrated Tomaso Campanella, the author of several philosophical

young enthusiast may have first been awakened to the causes of his country's degradation, and have become a patriot from reflection, as he was an ardent lover of liberty upon instinct.

It appears, however, that he occasionally escaped even from these last boundaries of social aggregation; that he directed his wanderings to the higher chain of the Abruzzi, and that he studied and designed amidst those amphitheatres of rocks, which, clothed with dark pines, and dashed with bursting torrents, were still freshly stamped with the commotions of that Nature, which in such altitudes knows no repose. There, almost within view of the bold and solitary student, hills sunk to valleys, valleys swelled to hills,—rivers shifted their

works, and a number of monks under the protection of some Calabrian bishops. One thousand five hundred banditti were subsidized as allies, and, with three hundred monks, were already under arms, when the conspiracy was detected by the Neapolitan Government, and the chiefs put to death by the most cruel and prolonged tortures.

courses, and latent fires broke forth to scathe the vigorous vegetation which their own smothered ardours had produced. There, amidst earthquakes and volcanic flames, in an atmosphere of lightning, and the perpetual crash of falling thunderbolts, may this Dante of painting have first taken in the elements of his famous "PURGATORIO!" for from such phenomena, which in their destructive sweep and mystic reproductions regard not human interests, man first borrowed his faith of fear, his god of wrath! the unremitting torture of ages, and fires of eternal punishment! the purgatory of one church, and the hell of all!

The event which most singularly marked the fearless enterprises of Salvator in the Abruzzi, was his captivity by the banditti, who alone inhabited them, and his temporary (and it is said voluntary) association with those fearful men. That he did for some time live among the picturesque outlaws, whose portraits he has multiplied without end, there is no doubt; and

though few of his biographers allude to the event, and those few but vaguely, yet tradition authenticates a fact, to which some of his finest pictures afford a circumstantial evidence. Salvator, who by temperament was an Epicurean, was on system a Stoic; and even many of his profession and country, who might have pardoned his genius and his successes, never forgave him that rigid morality, those severe unbending principles, which in his precepts and his example shamed the vices of his contemporaries, while they secured him the respect of the first and best men of his age. His association, therefore, among the banditti of the Abruzzi, must have been a matter of accident in the first instance, and of necessity in the second; and he seems to have turned the singular event exclusively to the profit of his art; and to have derived no other result from an adventure, which to a being so fanciful and imaginative may not have been wholly destitute of charm, than an accumulation of those

images to which his fame stands so largely indebted.*

The social and political position of the Neapolitan banditti in the beginning of the seventeenth century, forms a curious trait in the history of that beautiful and unfortunate coun-

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* The contemporary biographers of Salvator Rosa have alluded with timidity to this event. Some have passed it over in silence. The spirit of party has availed itself of an adventure so singular, and turned it with great virulence against the victim of its calumnies. A candid English writer observes, "A roving disposition, to which he is said to have given full scope, seems to have added a wildness to all his thoughts. We are told that he spent the early part of his life in a troop of banditti, and that the rocky desolate scenes in which he was accustomed to take refuge, furnished him with those romantic ideas in landscape, of which he is so exceedingly fond, and in the description of which he so greatly excels. His *Robbers*, as his detached figures are commonly called, are supposed also to have been taken from the life."—*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Art. *Rosa*.

try, where despotism and lawlessness even still meet and agree in their extremes, and where the sovereign continues to tolerate an order (if he no longer avails himself of its assistance) which arises out of the misrule of his own government. In the remotest antiquity, the mountains of the Abruzzi were under the special protection of the god of all thieves, Mercury, as they are now in the holy keeping of Saint Gologaro, the Mercury of the Catholic mythology, and the especial patron of Calabria. The genuine banditti, however, of the seventeenth century, were no vulgar cut-throats, who, like the *Maestrillos* and *Fra Diavolos* of modern times, confined their exploits to road robbery and indiscriminate plunder and assassination. They were, in fact, more nearly allied to the brave, bold Condottieri, and the black and white bands of Medici and of Suffolk, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and though, when unhired, they lived at large and wild, with their hand against every man, and every man's

hand against them, yet they occasionally rivalled in dignity and importance the standing armies of existing legitimates, fighting like them for hire in any cause that paid them, and attacking the rights and liberties of all who stood in the way of the ambition, cupidity, or despotism of their employers, with all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of legitimate warfare. Like the marine letter of marque, half pirate, and half national, their troops were regularly enrolled and disciplined; and though their ranks were filled with the wild and the worthless—with men born out of the pale of civilized society, or driven beyond it by their crimes,—yet many among them were of a superior cast: they were outlawed gentlemen of Naples, escaped from the wheel and the scaffold, to which their efforts in the cause of their country had condemned them; who, seeking shelter in the savage wilds of the Abruzzi, became, by their talents and rank, chiefs and leaders of men associated and armed

against society under the influence of far different causes. It is an historical fact, that the number, skill, valour, and fidelity of these bands had rendered them, at the period here alluded to, so formidable in the eyes of the Austro-Spanish government, and so respectable in the estimation of the people, that, by a strange inversion of principle, these natural enemies of society frequently became its chosen champions; and even the government, against whom they were so often and so openly at variance, was glad to take them into pay, and employ them in its service. When, however, they were in hostility to the legitimate cause, the same government pursued them with regular troops to the verge of their inaccessible fastnesses; and burnt, tortured, and hung the same persons as enemies, whom they had previously recompensed and encouraged as allies.*

* "Chaque Viceroi, chaque commandant de place, chaque employé du gouvernement avait des bandits

The strong-hold of this singular order had long been in the Abruzzi. There, amidst

> "Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens,
> And shades of death,"

they held with their families a wild and precarious, but not a joyless existence; while occasionally they were brigaded into separate bands, and distributed, under the protection of the government, among the towns and cities of the kingdom, or garrisoned the domestic fortresses of the factious Neapolitan barons, and others of the same rank, who lived in perpe-

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sous sa sauvegarde; auxquels il assurait l'impunité et la recompense des violences et des assassinats qu'il leur faisait commettre pour son compte. Les couvens même avaient leurs assassins; et dans la conspiration du Père Campanella on vit avec étonnement que les moines de la Calabre pouvaient mettre sous les armes plusieurs milliers de bandits. Les brigands campaient presque aux portes des villes, et l'on ne pouvait passer sans escort de Naples à Caserta ou à Averso."—*Sismondi Literat. du Midi.*

tual hostility with that ruling power, by which they were perpetually distrusted and oppressed. Many of these haughty nobles (themselves flying from the circles of their native metropolis) exercised the old trade of the Italian *fuorusciti*, and reclaimed their ancient rights as feudatory princes over the adjacent country. Upon these occasions they were sometimes joined, and sometimes opposed, by the banditti of the Abruzzi, as the interests or the feelings of these formidable outlaws led them to embrace or to reject their cause.

The conflicts of unregulated interests, and of lawless but powerful volitions,—the stern elevation of character, reckless of all human suffering, beyond all social relations,—the play of strong antipathies, and operation of strong instincts,—the fierce rebuff of passions, wild as the elements among which they were nurtured,—the anatomy of the mixed nature of man, laid bare, and stripped of all disguise, were subjects of ennobling study to one who saw all

things as a philosopher and a poet—one who was prone to trace, throughout the endless varieties of external forms, the deep-seated feelings that produced and governed their expression. In the fierce guerrilla warfare of the Abruzzi, between the Spanish and German troops and the mountain-bands, may be traced the leading character of that vast and wondrous battle-piece* which is destined to be the study of successive generations of artists; and to the necessities of the outlaw's life we are indebted for many of those singular groupings and views of violence and danger, which form the subjects not only of the pencil, but of the graver, of Salvator Rosa.

There is one engraving which, though evidently done *à colpo di pennello*, seems so plainly to tell the story of the wandering artist's captivity, that it may, as an historic fact, if not as a *chef-d'œuvre* of the art, merit a particular de-

* Now in the Musée, at Paris.

scription. In the midst of rocky scenery appears a group of banditti, armed at all points, and with all sorts of arms. They are lying, in careless attitudes but with fierce watchfulness, round a youthful prisoner, who forms the foreground figure, and is seated on a rock, with languid limbs hanging over the precipice, which may be supposed to yawn beneath. It is impossible to describe the despair depicted in this figure; it is marked in his position, in the droop of his head, which his nerveless arms seem with difficulty to support, and in the little that may be seen of his face, over which, from his recumbent attitude, his hair falls in luxuriant profusion (and the singular head and tresses of Salvator are never to be mistaken). All is alike destitute of energy and of hope, which the fierce beings grouped around the captive seem, in some sentence recently pronounced, to have banished for ever. Yet one there is who watches over the fate of the young victim: a woman stands immediately behind

him. Her hand stretched out, its forefinger resting on his head, marks him the subject of a discourse which she addresses to the listening bandits. Her figure, which is erect, is composed of those bold straight lines, which in art and nature constitute the *grand*. Even the fantastic cap or turban, from which her long disshevelled hair has escaped, has no curve of grace; and her drapery partakes of the same rigid forms. Her countenance is full of stern melancholy—the natural character of one whose feelings and habits are at variance, whose strong passions may have flung her out of the pale of society, but whose feminine sympathies still remain unchanged. She is artfully pleading for the life of the youth, by contemptuously noting his insignificance. But she commands while she soothes. She is evidently the mistress, or the wife of the Chief, in whose absence an act of vulgar violence may be meditated. The youth's life is saved: for that cause rarely fails

to which a woman brings the omnipotence of her feelings.

The time spent by Salvator among these outlaws has never been verified; but it is probable, and indeed evident, that he remained sufficiently long to fill both his imagination and his memory with accumulated combinations of the magnificent and the terrible. It is not impossible that the adventurous artist owed the security in which he pursued the interests of his art, in such abodes of violence and danger, to the exertion of talents both musical and poetical, not less calculated to amuse his ferocious hosts by the midnight fires of their earth-embosomed dens, than to captivate the voluptuous auditory of a Neapolitan saloon. One almost sees the melancholy severity of the well-pictured female who saved his life, softening into feminine emotion as she listens to lays composed for the syrens of the *Chiaja*, which she once may herself have merited and received: while the stern features of her bandit lover now

relax into pleased attention, at some humorous *improvviso* which recalls his native Naples, now contract into looks of dark distrust as he watches the mellowed expression of those black bright eyes, whose wildness never before softened to other accents than his own. The mountain auditory of the lyrist of Renella were, indeed, banditti, the outcasts of society; but, they were Italians; and original conformation may have triumphed over habits little favourable to the arts, or the tastes they engender.

Under what circumstances Salvator was restored to civilized society, the biographers, who scarcely do more than allude to his capture, have not detailed. Whether he escaped, or was liberated by the caprice or the generosity of the banditti, is unknown; but it is certain, that after having wandered through the most inaccessible regions of the kingdom of Naples, under every hardship incidental to poverty in such perilous and unaccommodated enterprises, he returned to the capital at an epoch marked

by the residence of the illustrious Lanfranco in that city, and by the intrigues of the school of Spagnuoletto, which not long after assumed a character of political importance.*

Fresh from the stupendous altitudes of the Abruzzi, with all their mightiness impressed upon his mind, the ardent disciple of Nature must have felt the superiority of her great school over all of mere human institution; and he must have been little inclined to enrol him-

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* "Salvator Rosa se mit ensuite sous Ribera, où il profita beaucoup. Il y resta jusqu'à vingt ans, qu'ayant perdu son père, Ribera le mena avec lui à Rome. Pendant quatres années il y fit des études considérables."—*Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres*, p. 351, Tom. 1. 1745, Paris.

Every word of this is false, and in direct contradiction to all the Italian writers on the same subject. Ribera's visit to Rome occurred before Salvator was born, after he had studied with Caravaggio in 1606.

When Rosa *did* enter the school of Ribera (Spagnuoletto), "*la frequentasse poco tempo*," says Lanzi, whose fidelity may always be depended on.

self, even if he had possessed the means, among the followers of the masters who then reigned supreme over the public taste of Naples. The state in which he found his wretched family on his return, plunged him in despondency; and that buoyant spirit which encountered fatigue and danger with such cheerfulness and patience, flagged and drooped under home inflictions, which were all directed at the heart, and which zeal and perseverance could not remove, nor enterprise and ardour hope to overcome.

The first illusions of early youth were fled, and the real and inevitable miseries of life, of which during the rest of his days (even in the bosom of prosperity) he entertained so keen and painful a conviction, came upon his apprehension in truths which sensibility sometimes anticipates, but which philosophy and reflection never fail to substantiate. He perceived that the talent and industry of his father, the piety and virtues of his mother

and innocent sisters, the genius and high spirit of his brother-in-law, were alike insufficient to save them from neglect, contempt, and distress; while on every side, crawling mediocrity and unabashed impudence snatched the meed of worth and merit: he saw the moral order of things everywhere deranged; and the laws of justice, he once fancied immutable, everywhere violated.

For the talents of Francesco Francanzani he appears to have entertained the highest respect; yet he found him, in spite of a genius none disputed, declining in his art, for want of that protection which, under despotic governments, holds the place of public suffrage. This young and original painter, reduced to struggle for the daily morsel that scarcely fed his family,* became sullen and soured to ferocity; and neglecting all the higher inspirations of his art, he executed only coarse subjects in the coarsest

* "Ne alcun soccorso sperar poteva dal cognato che aveva numerosa famiglia da sostentare."—*Pascoli.*

manner, for those homely customers, whose vulgar piety and strong energies found something analogous to their own feelings in the strongly-conceived martyrdoms which his cynical indignation dashed carelessly off for the public market.

These melancholy forecasts were soon converted into more painful realities. A few days after Salvator's return, Vito Antonio Rosa died in the arms of his son, and bequeathed to the maintenance and protection of an unprovided youth of eighteen, an helpless family, deprived, says one of his biographers expressly, "*d'ogni umano provvedimento**," of every human provision.

There is scarcely any position in the series of human ills (a fearful array!) more heart-rending in its contemplation than that of youth blasted in the spring of its brief enjoyment, checked in

* Pascoli expressively says, that the death of his father left him rather in misery than poverty, "La morte del padre, che lo lascio miserabile più tosto che povero."

the first flow of its warm and genial emotions, and repressed in its first ardent aspirations, by some untoward destiny, which anticipates the march of time, and hurries on the inflictions "which flesh is heir to," ere the diminished sensibility of age has prepared the heart for their endurance.

Such was the lot of Salvator Rosa; a man, who, from the internal evidence of all he said, wrote, or painted, was evidently endowed with sensibilities approaching to malady, and who, gifted with the true temperament of genius, was framed to receive all impressions in their utmost force and intensity. Alive, as he appears to have been through life, to all the "relations dear and all the charities" of consanguinity, he now stood in the midst of that helpless family, to which he was to be as

"Father, son, and brother,"

with no other means of rescuing them from the famine which already assailed them, than those his pencil could procure. His portfolios teemed with splendid sketches, which, at the distance of

a century from his death, would have procured any price, but which *then* would not purchase a morsel of bread. He had resources in his genius and classical education which should have afforded him a liberal existence, and have led at once to fortune and to fame, if merit and success were inevitably cause and effect; but he was oppressed even then with an intuitive conviction that worth and independence are stumbling-blocks, not stepping-stones, in the path of fortune.

The prevailing usage of the Neapolitan school had been to give but a short time to the study of design, and to proceed, almost immediately after the acquirement of its first elements, to that stage of the art, which they called "*à pittorare*," or *washing-in*. There was in this hurried mode of proceeding, which Salvator acquired in his brother-in-law's workshop, something analogous to his own bold, prompt, and rapid perceptions; and he had made such progress before his *giro* in Calabria, that

he had already executed some landscapes on canvass; ("*si fece ardito di por manó alle tele, ed a poco a poco si stese alla misura di quattro palmi,*" says Passeri). Such, however, was his poverty, at the moment which required all the advantages which the mechanism of the art could lend his genius, that he was unable to purchase the canvass to paint on, and was reduced to the necessity of executing his pictures upon that *primed* paper on which his boyish talents had first displayed themselves. Thus pressed, the young and obscure landscape-painter of Renella had no chance of appearing in the arena where the Spagnuoletto, the Lanfranco, the Domenichino, and their protected pupils, were disputing the prize of preeminence. In want and privation, and destitute of that tranquillity of mind so necessary to the concentration of genius on its subject, the only market open to him was the miserable bulk of one of those few *revenditori* who then, as now, held their stand for second-hand, damaged, and valueless goods in the *Strada della Carità*.

Thither, after having worked in his desolate garret all day, in view of penury and its concomitant discontent, the young artist was wont to repair at night, and timidly hovering near the old *bottega* of his virtuoso Shylock, to seize some propitious moment for entering and drawing from beneath his threadbare cloak one of those exquisite designs which have since contributed to his immortality. It is no stretch of the imagination to suppose him grouped with his shrewd chapman beneath the flame of a pendent lamp, such as still lights the similar shops of Naples, holding up one of his pictures for the old man's observation; his own fine face with its "African colouring" and passionate expression of impatient indignation, contrasting with the wizard look which escapes from under the Jew's large flapped, yellow hat, while he affectedly underrates a work of which he well knows all the merit. At last the purchase is made and the miserable pittance is given;—that "*scarcissimo prezzo*" which hardly sufficed

to satisfy with a "*vile morsel,*" the famine of those who depended solely on Salvator's exertions, even for this scanty sustenance.

With such means, and for such rewards, Salvator Rosa continued to labour with indefatigable but unrequited industry. All his recreations were laid aside. Pausilippo no longer re-echoed to the sweet tones of his lute. The *Cloris* and *Irenes* of his enamoured boyhood lived unsung, at least by *his* melancholy muse. He neither wrote nor read poetry. His studies, all bearing upon his art, were confined to sacred and profane history, the events and characters of which are spread over his smallest and least important landscapes; for even in his delineations of those "Silve Selvagge," which, like his own Dante, he loved best, man and his great moral agency are constantly to be found. There were (as critics have asserted) among these early productions of his pencil, of which some are still extant, many which were afterwards repeated by himself upon a great scale. The stamp

of originality, and the total absence of that mannerism then so prevalent, distinguish these his earliest no less than his later works. In their execution there was a freedom almost miraculous in so young and inexperienced a practitioner; and in the selection and conception of the subjects, there were evidences of the same bold, brilliant, and poetical imagination,—the same deep sagacious study of Nature, which characterized the finished works of his mature age. All was vast; all was characterized by strength and magnitude. A rock, a tree, a cloud, exhibited the elevation of his fancy. His most minute figures were marked by an expression which painted a character, while it indicated a form. His Robber Chief was always distinguishable from the ruffians he led*, less by his habits than by

* A splendid illustration of this remark lies before the author, as she writes, in an etching of Salvator's. It is a single figure, of a Captain of Banditti. He is alone, near a rock; his hair floating wildly on the wind, his countenance marked by that deep moral melancholy, that pen-

those distinctions which high breeding on the human, as on the brute subject, rarely fails to impress. The light leafing of his trees, which seem to vibrate with a motion of the passing air, the breaking up of his grounds, his groups and figures all in movement, exhibit a life and an activity that excited correspondent sympathy in the spectator, and evinced that Nature in his works, as in her own, knew no pause. Yet these early works, containing the *prima intenzione* of many after-productions, which, if better executed, were not more powerfully conceived, — these first and beautiful efforts of Salvator's genius sold, says his friend Baldinelli, *at the lowest or vilest prices*—"*ad ogni prezzo più vile.*" It is singular that he, who afterwards stood forth as the only eminently original master which Naples ever produced, should have excited no attention, at the time that the Neapolitan School had attained to an excellence, and

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sive and meditative sadness, which the turbulent remorse of vulgar minds never produces.

enjoyed a reputation it never before and never after possessed, and when the public taste consequently may be supposed to have reached its maximum. But the state of painting in Naples at that epoch, both as an art and as a profession, throws some light upon a fact, which appears strange at least, if not mysterious.

The Greek origin of Naples suggests the idea of its early excellence in the arts. The fine organization of its fantastic people, to whom the term genius has been applied as generic,—the remembrance that a school of design existed in Sicily before one was established at Athens,—the fact that the art of painting was never lost there; and that those black-visaged Madonnas which supplied the Church with its first commodities in that line, though called of the Greek school, were executed by Neapolitan masters before the age of Cimabue,—all tend to impress the preconception, that the school of Naples should have been pre-eminent, and have given to Italy some of her most original and illustrious masters. The

fact, however, is quite otherwise. Naples produced but *one original master*, whose merits she never acknowledged till posterity forced them on her apprehension,—and that master was Salvator Rosa. Her school of painting, which alternately took the epithet of *Zingarescha*, *Raffaelesca*, and *Caravaggesca*, till the *manner* of all met and combined in the school of Spagnuoletto (the second epoch of painting in Naples), was ever in the eyes of the great Italian virtuosi a *mere* school of mannerism, "*Lo Scuolo dei manieristi.*"* The genius of the people was turned to another art, in which they have distanced all other nations; and the establishment of a school of painting in the land of the Syrens was but an effort of fashion,

* From the sixteenth century all the great capitals of Italy began to be distinguished by their schools, which had each some marked and peculiar characteristic. That of Naples, as Lanzi very justly observes, "*non ha avuto forme così originali come altri d' Italia. Ma ha dato luogo ad ogni buona maniera, secondo che i giovani usciti di patria vi han riportato lo stile di questo o di quel maestro.*"

and of the domineering emulation of the age. But what the leaders of the Neapolitan School of Painting wanted in originality they supplied by energy, and by that "*certo fuoco animatore*," which seems the birth-right of their volcanic clime. The same fierce passions which armed them against each other in their work-rooms, and united them against all foreign intruders upon their exclusive monopoly of the national suffrage, came out in the details of their pictorial compositions, which rarely reflected other forms and aspects than those presented by the wild, acute-visaged population by which they were surrounded.

In the early part of the seventeenth century, the manner of the Neapolitan school was purely *Caravaggesque*. Michael Angelo Amoreghi, better known as *Il Caravaggio*, (from the place of his birth in the Milanese, where his father held no higher rank than that of a stone-mason,) was one of those powerful and extraordinary geniuses, which are destined by

their force and originality to influence public taste, and master public opinion, in whatever line they start. The Roman School, to which the almost celestial genius of Raphael had so long been as a tutelar divinity, sinking rapidly into degradation and feebleness, suddenly arose again under the influence of a new chief, whose professional talent and personal character stood opposed in the strong relief of contrast, to that of his elegant and poetical predecessor.

The influence* of this "*uomo intrattabile e brutale*," this *passionate and intractable man*, as he is termed by an Italian historian of the arts†, sprang from the depression of the school

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* Passeri observes of the change wrought by Caravaggio, "*fece prender fiato al gusto buono ed al naturale, il quale allora era sbandito dal mondo, che solo andava perduto dietro a un depingere ideale e fantastico, ma lontano dalla natura e dal vero.*"—*Vita di Guido Reni.*

† "*Si propose la sola Natura per oggetto del suo pennello,*" says Bellori, in his Life of Caravaggio; and

which preceded him. Nothing less than the impulsion given by the force of contrast, and the shock occasioned by a violent change, could have produced an effect on the sinking art, such as proceeded from the strength and even coarseness of Caravaggio. He brought back Nature triumphant over mannerism—Nature, indeed, in all the exaggeration of strong motive and overbearing volition, but still it *was* Nature; and his bold example dissipated the

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when, on his first arrival in Rome, the *cognoscenti* advised him to study from the antiques, and to take Raphael as his model, he used to point to the promiscuous groups of men and women passing before him, and say "those were the models and the masters provided him by Nature." Teased one day by a pedant on the subject, he stopped a gipsy-girl who was passing by his window, called her in, placed her near his easel, and produced his splendid "*Zingana in atto di predire l'avventure*," his well-known and exquisite Egyptian Fortune-teller. His "Gamblers" was done in the same manner.—*See Bellori, Vita di Michel Angelo da Caravaggio.*

languor of exhausted imitation, and gave excitement even to the tamest mediocrity and the feeblest conception.* The languid public of Rome, startled into emotion by representations so new and so striking, communicated its feeling to all Italy; and the fame and influence of Caravaggio obtained an *éclat* from his "Gipsy Fortune-teller," and his "Gamesters," scarcely less brilliant than that extorted by the divine Madonnas of Raphael, and the laughing cherubs of Coreggio.

The temperament which produced this peculiar genius was necessarily violent and gloomy. Caravaggio tyrannized over his school, and attacked his rivals with other arms than those of his art. He was a professed duellist; and having killed one of his antagonists in a rencontre, he fled to Naples, where an asylum

* Of the awe which he inspired, Passeri has given a very characteristic anecdote in his Life of Guercino, page 374.

was readily granted him.* His manner as a painter, his character as a man, were both calculated to succeed with the Neapolitan

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* In a warm dispute with one of his own young friends in a tennis-court, he struck him dead with a racket, having been himself severely wounded. Notwithstanding the triumphs with which he was loaded in Naples, where he executed some of his finest pictures, he soon got weary of his residence there, and went to Malta. His superb picture of the Grand Master obtained for him the cross of Malta, a superb golden chain, placed on his neck by the Grand Master's own hands, and two slaves to attend him. All these honours did not prevent the new knight from falling back into old habits. "*Il suo torbido ingegno*," says Bellori, plunged him into new difficulties: he fought and wounded a noble cavaliere, was thrown into prison by the Grand Master, escaped most miraculously, fled to Syracuse, and obtained the suffrages of the Syracusans by painting his splendid picture of the Santa Morte, for the church of Santa Lucia. In apprehension of being taken by the Maltese knights, he fled to Messina, from thence to Palermo, and returned to Naples, where hopes were given him of the Pope's pardon. Here, picking a

school*; and the "*maniera Caravaggesca*" thenceforward continued to distinguish its productions, till the art, there as throughout all Europe, fell into utter degradation, and became lost, almost as completely as it had been under the Lower Empire.

Resembling their master in character, in principles, and in genius, the pupils of Caravaggio, while they ambitiously governed public

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quarrel with some military men at an inn-door, he was wounded, took refuge on board a felucca, and set sail for Rome. Arrested by a Spanish guard at a little port (where the felucca cast anchor) by mistake for another person, when released he found the felucca gone, and in it all his property. Traversing the burning shore under a vertical sun, he was seized with a brain fever, and continued to wander through the deserts of the Pontine Marshes, till he arrived at Porto Ercoli, when he expired, in his fortieth year.

* "Con quelle sue ombre terribili, con quel fracasso di scuri e di lumi, con quei grand tratti a mecchia, che non lasciano distinguere i contorni, con quelle sue ignobili minacciose figure, sorprese il pubblico."

taste, as carefully excluded all who were not educated in the master-faction; and they pursued with deadly persecution all foreign masters, whose celebrity obtained for them any of the great public works, commanded by particular congregations or corporate bodies of Naples. These bandits of the arts were Bellisario Corenzio, Giambattista Caracciolo, and Giuseppe Ribera, called *lo Spagnuoletto.* The first a Greek, and originally a pupil of Arpino; the second a Neapolitan, and wholly and devotedly of the school of Caravaggio; and the last a Spaniard, who imbibed his first inspiration at the easel of the armed assassin, whose genius he nearly equalled, and whose atrocity he far surpassed.

Giuseppe Ribera had been brought in his infancy from his native country by his father, a follower of the Spanish interests; and he was placed in his childhood in the school of Caravaggio (1606). It was in vain that in aftertimes he was sent on his *giro,* and that in the

course of his itinerant studies he adopted for a time something of the ennobling and the beautiful, from the Roman, Tuscan, and Bolognese masters: Nature and Caravaggio still held the ascendant; and he returned to preside over a school which was equally celebrated for its genius and its ruffianism;—for producing the boldest bravoes and the best painters that Naples ever boasted.*

The national partiality of the Viceroy soon distinguished "*Lo Spagnuoletto*" from among his condisciples. Loaded with honours, created painter to the court, and assuming that supremacy over his friends and coadjutors Corenzio and Caracciolo, which his genius and particular position gave him, he yet admitted them

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* "Così il tempo che corse da Bellisario al Giordano è la più lieta epocha di questa istoria; avendo riguardo al numero de' bravi artefici e alle opere di gusto. È però la più tetra non pur della scuola Napolitana, ma della pittura; ove si abbia riguardo alle cattive arti, e a' misfatti che vi occorsero."—*Lanzi.*

to his confidence, and formed by their aid those "*Fazioni de' Pittori*," those conspiracies of the painters, which in the course of time produced a very different effect from that intended by the court-painter of the Spanish Viceroy. His object was to exclude from Naples all talent, except that which emanated from his own school; and, backed by the influence of the government, and the ferocious courage of his two bravoes and their followers, he gave full play to those dark passions, which, while they pointed his poniard, directed his pencil to the representation of human suffering, the deformities of Nature, torture methodized into system, and agonies detailed with frightful fidelity. While the writhings of Saint Bartholomew, the spasms of Ixion, and the colourless muscles of the attenuated Saint Jerome employed his genius, he was armed, with his two associates, against the fame and the lives of the most eminent men of his day. The execution of the public works, altar-

pieces, and the decoration of the several chapels of the magnificent cathedrals of Italy, had always been the objects of ambition to the most eminent of the Italian painters. In the best ages of the art, merit and reputation always decided the choice; but in its decline, intrigue and the interference of government uniformly influenced the decision. At the period in question several great works were designed, whose execution was to be committed to masters, at the will of the particular convents to which the churches to be decorated belonged. The choir of the Certosa, the great churches of the "*Spirito Santo*" and "*Gesù Nuovo*," were to be enriched by the arts: but the work most coveted by the great foreign masters, and still withheld from the Neapolitan cabal, was the royal chapel of the Duomo of Saint Januarius, the temple of the people and the object of national veneration. A committee, with the title of "*Cavalieri deputati*," had been appointed to superintend the works

of the Duomo; and they had obeyed the people in successively calling upon the illustrious Annibal Caracci, and his immortal pupils Guido and Domenichino, to undertake the work: but the intrigues, the persecutions, and the violence of the court-painter were found more influential than the wishes of the whole nation; and these great men successively paid the forfeit of their peace or of their lives, for having accepted the invitation and intruded upon the gloomy and desperate conspirators. The injustice and indignity with which Annibal Caracci had been treated by the chiefs of the Neapolitan School*, combining with his deep sense of the ill-treatment of his patron, Cardinal Farnese, sent him back to Rome, to die of a broken heart; and his pupil Guido, who had succeeded

* He arrived in Naples, 1609, and began his work in the Gesù Nuovo; but, persecuted and calumniated by the faction, "*quel divino artifice*," says Lanzi, "returned to Rome, where he shortly after died."

him, and the venerable Arpino, both saved their lives by flight. The narrow escape of Guido and his distinguished pupil Gessi, and the fate of the two ingenious artists they had left behind them*, had reduced the committee to despair of ever seeing the pictures in their great national churches completed by the most illustrious masters of their age; and at last, yielding to intrigues secretly favoured by the Viceregal Court, they divided the works among the formidable triumviri. Corenzio and Caracciolo had the frescoes for their portion; and the great altar-pieces were reserved for their chief, Spagnuoletto; but the *Cavalieri deputati*, struck with repentance for their transient weakness, suddenly recalled their orders, commanded the paltry labours of the two enraged *Frescanti* to be effaced,

* Gio. Battista Ruggieri and Lorenzo Menini were seduced on board a galley in the Bay of Naples, and disappeared. A mystery long hung over their fate.

and declared that Domenichino, the greatest historical painter that Italy ever produced, was alone worthy to execute works which were to do honour to the piety of a devout people, and to the munificence and judgment of a wealthy order.

Domenichino reluctantly accepted the invitation (1629); and he arrived in Naples with the zeal of a martyr devoted to a great cause, but with a melancholy foreboding, which harassed his noble spirit, and but ill-prepared him for the persecution he was to encounter. Lodged under the special protection of the *Deputati* in the *Palazzo dell' Arcivescovato*, adjoining the church, on going forth from his sumptuous dwelling the day after his arrival, he found a paper, addressed to him, sticking in the keyhole of his anteroom. It informed him, that if he did not instantly return to Rome, he should never return there with life. Domenichino immediately presented himself to the Spanish Viceroy, the *Conte Mon-*

terei, and claimed protection for a life then employed in the service of the Church. The piety of the Count, in spite of his partiality to the faction, induced him to pledge the word of a grandee of Spain, that Domenichino should *not* be molested; and from that moment a life, no longer openly assailed, was embittered by all that the littleness of malignant envy could invent to undermine its enjoyments and blast its hopes. Calumnies against his character, criticisms on his paintings, ashes mixed with his colours, and anonymous letters, were the miserable means to which his rivals resorted; and, to complete their work of malignity, they induced the Viceroy to order pictures from him for the Court of Madrid; and when these were little more than laid in in dead colours, they were carried to the Viceregal palace, and placed in the hands of Spagnuoletto to retouch and alter at pleasure. In this disfigured and mutilated condition they were dispatched to the gallery of the King of

Spain. Thus drawn from his great works by despotic authority, for the purpose of effecting his ruin, enduring the complaints of the *Deputati*, who saw their commission neglected, and suffering from perpetual calumnies and persecutions, Domenichino left the superb picture of the *Martyrdom of San Gennaro*, which is now receiving the homage of posterity, and fled to Rome; taking shelter in the solemn shades of Frescati, where he resided some time under the protection of Cardinal Ippolito Aldobrandini.*

* It was at this period that Domenichino was visited by his biographer Passeri, then an obscure youth engaged to assist in the repairs of the pictures in the Cardinal's chapel. "When we arrived at Frescati," says Passeri in his simple style, "Domenichino received me with much courtesy; and hearing that I took a singular delight in the belles lettres, it increased his kindness to me. I remember me, that I gazed on this man as though he were an angel. I remained till the end of September occupied in restoring the chapel of Saint Sebastian, which had been ruined by the damp. Sometimes Domenichino would join

Obliged, however, at length to return to Naples to fulfil his fatal engagements, overwhelmed both in mind and body by the persecutions

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us, singing delightfully to recreate himself as well as he could. When night set in, we returned to our apartment; while he most frequently remained in his own, occupied in drawing, and permitting none to see him. Sometimes, however, to pass the time, he drew caricatures of us all, and of the inhabitants of the villa; and when he succeeded to his perfect satisfaction, he was wont to indulge in immoderate fits of laughter; and we, who were in the adjoining room, would run in to know his reason, and then he shewed us his spirited sketches, (*'spiritose galanterie.'*) He drew a caricature of me with a guitar, one of Cannini (the painter), and one of the Guarda Roba, who was lame with the gout; and of the Sub-guarda Roba, a most ridiculous figure. To prevent our being offended, he caricatured himself. These portraits are now preserved by Signor Giovanni Pietro Bellori in his study."*—*Vita di Domenichino.*

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* P. Bellori (who wrote the Lives of the Painters and of the famous traveller *Pietro della Valle)* was nephew to Francesco Angeloni, who was, at the moment here alluded

of his *soi-disant* patrons and his open enemies, he died, says Passeri, "*fra mille crepacuori*," amidst *a thousand heart-breakings*, with some suspicion of having been poisoned, in 1641.

Meanwhile Lanfranco, the *quondam* condisciple of Domenichino in the school of the Caracci, his powerful rival and deadly foe, received an invitation from the Jesuits of Naples to execute the principal pictures of their new and magnificent church, Il Gesù, (1631.) Lanfranco, the popular *Parmegiano* of the seventeenth century, who, if he could not surpass, frequently approached the excellence of Domenichino, and alone disputed with him the palm of glory—Lanfranco had long enjoyed the most brilliant existence and dazzling reputation of any painter of the age. Reared in

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to by Passeri, secretary to the Cardinal Ippolito Aldobrandini, and a resident at Frescati; by which means he probably became possessed of the designs and caricatures which passed into the hands of his nephew Bellori.

the anterooms of feudal nobility, the favourite of the great and the reverenced of the vulgar, a knight of the Roman empire, an intimate of cardinals and the *protegé* of popes, he yet was by temperament independent; and conscious alike of his genius and his influence, he epitomized in his person all that has been written of the pride, pomposity, and love of display, which at that particular period distinguished Rubens and others of the most eminent artists.* Endowed with a rapid and indefatigable power of application, so falsely supposed incompatible with genius, his works were

* When John Duke of Braganza, afterwards King of Portugal, invited Rubens to Villa Viciosa, that artist set out with such a train of followers, that the Duke, apprehending the expense of entertaining so pompous a visitor, wrote to stop his journey, accompanying his excuse with a present of a hundred pistoles. The sumptuous painter refused this gift; and replied, that he had not proposed to paint, but to recreate for a time at Villa Viciosa, and for that purpose had brought a thousand pistoles to spend there.

more numerous and more generally successful than those of any painter of the age. His prices were enormous, his receipts immense; but his prodigality superior to both. Splendid, luxurious, and ostentatious, his villa of *La Vigna*, near the *Porta San Pancrazio*, was the resort of the festive, the elegant, and the dissipated of Rome; and his beautiful wife, Cassandra Barli, (a true Roman lady of the Claudian day,) haughty and "*di spirito molto resoluto*," encouraged and participated in the expensive habits of her husband.

The secret disorder which such extravagance had introduced into the affairs of Lanfranco, induced him to accept the offers of the *Padri Gesuiti*, whose liberality, as boundless as their wealth, gave him his own prices. Accompanied by his superb wife, his three beautiful and accomplished daughters, his *Seguaci*, or school, and a retinue of servants and equipages, he arrived in Naples with all the *éclat* of a travelling prince. His showy reputation and

bustling character were well adapted to the Neapolitan manners, and strikingly contrasted with the modesty and retirement of the sublime but melancholy and ruined Domenichino. That he was the rival, and had been the personal enemy of the eminent painter, who had been preferred by the Neapolitan *dilettanti* to their native artists, rendered his reception, even by the formidable "faction," gracious and flatter-

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* The following original letter of Lanfranco to his friend at Rome, Signor Ferrante Carlo, paints the flattering reception he received at Naples, and forms a strong contrast to the epistles of his great rival.

"Sign. Ferrante, mio Signor,

"La do nuovo che sono arrivato con sanità a Napoli per grazia di nostro Signore, con quella parte di famiglia che V. S. sa: dove sono molto ben visto e accarezzato; talche il contento saria perfetto, se non fosse la rimembranza non diro della patria e di Roma, ma degli amici e padroni che sono in essa. Dei padri Gesuiti ho recevuto, e ricevo giornalmente gran favori, come fa Cassandra da molte gentili donne di questa paese."

ing.* He was immediately presented to the reigning Viceroy, the Duke di Medina, and earnestly prayed by the Vice-queen, a Spanish lady of great beauty, to paint her picture. All the Neapolitan artists now hurried to *Il Gesù*, and crowded beneath the cupola, where, mounted on a lofty platform, Lanfranco was already creating that beatific vision of Paradise, which was to surpass the "glory" of his cupola of St. Andrea at Rome. All were anxious to attract the attention of this celebrated artist, either by their personal merit, or by decrying the talents of his immortal rival*; and the highest as well as the lowest among the Nea-

* The rivalry of Domenichino and Lanfranco began in their boyhood, when they were both pupils of the Caracci. Passeri, however, observes, "Col tempo cessarano tutte le ostilità e le perfidie:" and if Domenichino really died of poison, and not (as is much more likely) of a broken heart, Lanfranco by this attestation stands clear of a crime not very consonant with his frank, loyal, and amiable character.

politan painters (all alike vain and self-opinionated,) sought his suffrage for their works, or endeavoured to get his testimony in favour of their peculiar *maniera.*

One there was whom poverty or pride held aloof from the circle which crowded round the platform of *Lanfranco:* too obscure to attract his notice, too unbending to seek it; and though not wholly unknown as the author of those bold sketches which sold "*ad ogni prezzo più vile,*" still known only by the familiar and insignificant appellation of *Il Salvatoriello.* It happened that as the Cavaliere Lanfranco was returning one day in his splendid equipage from *La Chiesa del Gesù* to his lodgings by *La Strada della Carità,* he was struck by a picture in oil which hung outside the shop-door of a *revenditore,* with other odds and ends of second-hand wares. Lanfranco stopped his carriage, and ordered *Antonio Richieri,* his favourite pupil, to alight, and bring him the painting which had attracted his attention.

The *revenditore* was struck by an honour so little to be expected. The carriage of the great Signor Cavaliere Lanfranco stopping before his miserable bulk, was a distinction to excite the envy of all his compeers in the *Strada della Carità;* and he came forward with many gesticulations of respect, wiping the dust from a painting on canvass, four palms in length, which had lain for weeks unnoticed at his shop-door; while "hells" and "purgatories," saints and martyrs, had *gone off* with successful rapidity.

Lanfranco took the picture into his carriage; and a nearer inspection convinced him of the accuracy of his first rapid decision. It was labelled "*Istoria di Agar e del suo figlio languenti per la seta.*" The affecting story of Hagar had already been treated by Guercino; and the virtuosi of other and distant countries made pilgrimages to Bologna,* to view that

* This picture originally hung in the Sampieri gallery at Bologna.

masterpiece of art which now attracts the eyes even of the unlearned, amidst all the splendid works which surround it in the gallery of the Brera at Milan.

Guercino had taken that moment in the story of Hagar, when, having been brought back to the arms of Abraham by "*the angel of the Lord*," she is again driven forth through the jealousy of Sarah. She is still in all the force of health and pride of beauty; and she pauses at the threshold of the timid Abraham's dwelling to expostulate and to reproach. The scene is suited to the action; and the commodious pastoral dwelling, from which she is sent an outcast, exhibits all the rural wealth of that Patriarch who is described as being very "rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold." But another epoch and another view of the story of Hagar had been taken in the picture which now fixed the attention of the chief of the Roman school. The scene was the wilderness of Beersheba; but so boldly conceived, so desolate, and so

dreary, that Nature could alone furnish its details in those vast regions where few then had ventured to study. The incident was that, so terrible and affecting in the life of the young outcast mother, when, having long wandered through pathless deserts and under burning skies, she beholds her last hope extinguished; "for the water was spent in the bottle" which Abraham had put on her shoulder, and the bread had long been devoured which stood between her child and death. She was no more the same blooming and indignant Hagar as at the moment of departure; but that Hagar who had, indeed, been "hardly dealt with." She appeared to have just "cast her child under one of the shrubs," and had "sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bow-shot; for she said, Let me not see the death of the child: and she sat over against him, and lifted up her voice and wept."

There was in the conception of this picture a tone of deep and powerful feeling, a gloomy

and melancholy originality, which probably struck on the imagination of Lanfranco even more than its execution. He sought for the name of the painter, who was evidently of no school, who copied no master, and whose manner was all his own; and in a corner he perceived a superscription unknown to fame, and by its diminutive termination almost consigned to ridicule: It was "Salvatoriello." The *rivenditore* either could not, or would not, give any intelligence concerning the painter; and Lanfranco, paying without hesitation the price demanded, carried home the picture in his carriage, and gave general orders to his pupils to purchase all they saw bearing the signature of *Salvatoriello*, without reservation. When he departed for Rome, Hagar was the companion of his voyage, and became the chief ornament of his picture-gallery at La Vigna,* where he shewed it himself to Passeri.

* All that has been said in the modern biographical

This incident of the purchase of Hagar, and the sweeping order that followed it, caused considerable sensation in the school of Spagnuoletto, and among the *dilettanti* of Naples; which the *revenditore* who had sold the picture, and others of his brethren who were in possession of works by the same hand, made use of to raise the humble price hitherto demanded for

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sketches of Salvator Rosa, particularly by Fuseli and Pilkington, of the patronage afforded him by Lanfranco, amounts to the solitary fact alluded to by his own contemporaries, that Lanfranco bought some beautiful but low-priced pictures of Salvatoriello, when at Naples, for La Vigna. Neither Bellori, nor any of the Italian biographers of Lanfranco, make the slightest allusion to his ever having spoken to or seen Salvator. In the life, however, prefixed to Salvator's satires, it is said, that Lanfranco *assisted him with money and instructions*, "*con consiglio e col denaro lo incoraggi a proseguire i suoi studj.*" Neither Baldinucci nor Passeri (the chief authorities for all that has been written of Salvator Rosa in modern times,) say any thing on the subject. The account given by Passeri is as follows; "Quando ritornò

the *quadretti* of the young and neglected artist. They now began to place some value on pictures, which they had hitherto considered it a risk to purchase, even at prices which scarcely repaid the expense for canvass and colours.

But if the public and the profession took some interest in an incident so trifling, it ope-

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il Lanfranco a Roma da Napoli l'ultima volta, che vi morì, condusse seco quel quadro di Agar, e me lo fece vedere, e per verità era tocco con gran gusto pittoresco. Quei bottegari che si avvidero, che un Lanfranco, pittore di quella stima, comprava i Quadri di *Salvatoriello*, da loro così chiamato, fecero argomento che fossero di valore, e cominciarono a fare istanza di volerne; ed egli a cui non mancò mai l'accortezza, fattosi destro, si pose in maggior altezza di prezzo." P. 418.

Pascoli, who wrote later, however, observes that Lanfranco having purchased his picture, sought his acquaintance, encouraged him to study, and employed him in painting others. The perpetuated poverty of Salvator during his youth, is the best comment on this variable text.

rated like a spell on the indigent and depressed *Salvatoriello.*

There is a proud consciousness accompanying the highest order of genius, which no neglect can stifle, no failure extinguish. It is a part of that genius itself, springing out of its discrimination, and belonging to its instincts. It may be wounded, blighted, disappointed, but it can never be deceived. It *will* appreciate the superiority out of which it arises, in spite of the *dictum* of passing opinion and the temporary decrees of a misjudging generation. Equally remote from the petulant arrogance of pretending mediocrity, as from the canting submission of that seeming virtue Humility, it judges, boldly but calmly, of the merit it accompanies, by a standard, which contemporary opinion cannot influence. This cheering confidence was not wanting amidst the efforts of the miserable Salvatoriello, through all the neglect and obscurity of his young and struggling days; and it broke forth frankly, though perhaps indiscreetly,

in the hour of his more prosperous fortunes. He knew his own merit from the first; and a feeling conviction of the contempt and indifference with which he was treated in his native country was, perhaps, the suffering he was the least able to support.

The discrimination of one of the first masters of the age (a foreigner to whom he was unknown even by name) had found him out, and this decision in his favour gave him a confidence that raised those drooping and susceptible spirits, which were but too prone to sink into the deep gloom of cheerless despondency. It had also the dangerous effect of awakening a scarcely concealed emotion of triumph over those, who, by all the arts of intrigue and servility had failed to obtain the suffrages of the great umpire, who had lavished them on the only *one* who had neither sought his notice, nor availed himself of his favour. Greedy of honour and of fame, as Baldinucci describes the young painter to have been (*"avido di onore e di stima,"*)

and reckless then, as through life, of all sordid views, he yet immediately raised his prices; and though frequently refused his demand, (for there came no more Lanfrancos to the shops of the *rivenditori*,) he persisted in the courageous resolution of not underselling himself, even when famine stared him in the face, and when the exigencies of his family urged him to the sacrifice of that self-respect, which his haughty spirit never after forfeited.

The judgment passed by Lanfranco on his works, by making him known to fame, exposed him to the envy and hatred of the less distinguished candidates for that illustrious painter's notice; and the indiscretion which naturally belonged to his youth, his ready wit and petulant spirit, the brilliant repartees and bitter sarcasms with which he replied to their taunts and calumnies, raised against him that species of enmity, the most deadly, because it is founded on wounded vanity, which never forgives. The painters of Naples, many of

them ingenious, but all uneducated, attacked him on the score of his presumption, and on the miserable necessities which obliged him to work for the *rivenditori;* a circumstance then considered as positive degradation. These vulgar sarcasms he retorted by epigrams, distinguished no less by their classic elegance than their causticity. He sung the satires he wrote; and while he drew the laughter on his side, he armed the dull (always the most numerically powerful) against him. Those versatile talents, however, which raised him an host of enemies, procured him *one* friend, who was well calculated, by his genius and the peculiar cast of his position, to appreciate all that was singular and admirable in the young painter's character. This friend was Ancillo Falcone, the first and best of the pupils of Spagnuoletto, whom for a time he rivalled, and in a peculiar style finally surpassed. Falcone was sixteen years older than Salvator, and was now himself the chief of a school, which, partaking of his

own manner, still perpetuated the style of the school of his gloomy master. His great talent was displayed in the representation of battles, in which he was long inimitable, and in which he was never surpassed but by his friend and disciple, Salvator Rosa. Falcone was, indeed, the Xenophon of his art, and, as it afterwards appeared, was well calculated to fight the battles he painted. The energy of his character and the elevation of his mind were exhibited in all he executed. He drew up his forces on canvass with a skill that shewed him no less an able tactician, than an exquisite artist. His subjects were all chosen from history; and his belligerent groups, of all nations and æras, various in their costume and physiognomy as in their arms and evolutions, were all vital in their expression. The motions and attitudes of his figures, and even of his horses, were full of nature and propriety; and it was difficult to believe that this warrior-painter had never seen a battle fought until long after his fame as a

painter of battles was established. But it was easy to discern through his earliest productions, the vocation of the future Captain of the *Compagnia della Morte.*

The merits of the obscure Salvatoriello were, probably, made known to Falcone through the incident of Lanfranco's distinction; Falcone by generously opening to him his own school, and presenting him to Spagnuoletto, acquired for himself and his chief the glory of having counted among their disciples one who was destined to surpass them both. But though a friendship thus begun terminated only with the lives of Falcone and Rosa, the benefit derived by the latter, in a professional point of view, was not considerable*. He rather passed

* It is singular that Passeri, who lived in habits of intimacy with Rosa, and must have taken many of his details from Rosa's own mouth, never mentions his having studied either with Spagnuoletto or with Falcone. Pascoli, however, observes, that "he was esteemed and beloved by Ribera," and that while he frequented his school he greatly improved himself in design and colouring.

through the schools of Spagnuoletto and Falcone, than studied in them; and, as Vasari says of Coreggio, was still a painter "made by Nature, rather than by any particular master." Falcone was, indeed, willing to give his young disciple the advantages which rules and the mechanical instruction of the art could afford; but he could do no more—he could not procure him employment; and the unfortunate youth continued, as before, to labour for the *rivenditori;* but, from the increase of his prices, with infinitely less success. His pictures, as they were chiefly landscapes, enriched with groups and incidents taken from profane history, and from the more brilliant adventures of heroic poetry, were not adapted to the Neapolitan market, and in the self-will of honest uncompromising genius he refused to prostitute* his talents to the bad passions and peculiar pre-

* "E molto fu egli fiero di se medesimo, che se conosceva, e tenevasi in pregio."—*Pascoli.*

judices of his times and country. He adhered pertinaciously to the delineation of the scenery of Nature, and of human incidents; and when called on by his employers for a subject of terror and suffering, he chose to exhibit the punishment inflicted on a tyrant, rather than the agonies of a divine and innocent being.

The neglect he endured in his native country, whose suffrage he (like all patriots) would have preferred to every other, preyed upon his spirits, and added to his embarrassments: while the consciousness of his superior merits, which he carried to excess, and an ambition which never slumbered, alone supported him through this period of obloquy and distress.

CHAPTER IV.

1634—5.

Departure of Salvator for Rome—Milton's arrival there about the same period—Social and political state of Rome favourable to the Arts—Virtù and patronage of the Barberini family—Urban the VIIIth.—Lorenzo Bernini architect of the Vatican—His character and influence—Position of the surviving pupils of the School of the Caracci on the arrival of Salvator in Rome—The Ultra-montane School—Its vogue and peculiar characteristics—Anecdotes of its leading members—Opposition between the Flemish and Italian Schools—Salvator stands aloof from both—His solitary wanderings in the Campagna—Works for a miserable remuneration for the rivenditori of the *Piazza Navona*—His obscurity and poverty described in a Cantata composed by himself—Infected by the Mal-aria, obliged to return to Naples for the recovery of his health.

It is one of the peculiar attributes of genius, or of the temperament which produces genius,

that its energies increase in proportion to the pressure of those adverse circumstances which require its exertion. The dark moment of Salvator's life, when famine had already begun its ravages in the miserable family* for whose support he still toiled in vain, was the instant which gave birth to his resolution of leaving Naples †, and of seeking the way to fortune by a broader path than that which was open to him in the land of his birth—a land wholly unworthy of the genius it wanted knowledge to appreciate, or patriotism to recompense. With all that promptitude of will, which through life

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* " Trovossi egli colla madree col restante della famiglia, in *miserabilissimo* stato ed oltremodo afflitto dalle miserie, fino à mancargli il necessario sostentamento, nel tempo appunto in cui maggiori abbisognavagli i comodi, e la quiete per attendere agli studi!!"—*Vita di Salvator Rosa, tratta da vari Autori.*

† " Parendogli di far torto al suo nome, tenerlo ristratto e fra le mure di Napoli, voleva farlo noto anche fuori, e trasferre à Roma."—*Pascoli.*

left him no languid pause for timid consideration, he resolved on visiting Rome; and the execution of his project followed close upon its conception. Friendless, if not hopeless, he began this journey in his twentieth year*; leaving Naples with such heart-burnings of deep-seated indignation, as those only feel, who, loving their native land, are driven from it by a neglect, which no triumph of foreign suffrages can ever obliterate or assuage.

In catching a last view of the paradise he was leaving, he is said to have shed tears. For Salvator, like all persons of genius not early corrupted, was a patriot; and his frequent returns to his worthless country, debased as it was by ages of political degradation, attest the love he bore it. But if "*some natural tears he dropped,*" tears soon dry at twenty: and while he trod, step by step, that *Appian Way*, of which Horace had bequeathed him the poetical

* In the year 1634-5.

topography, his spirits rallied; and the images of the antique world, which rose in sublime succession on his view, from *Capo da Chino* to the *Porta San Giovanni*, in awakening the classical associations of his well-furnished memory, opened new sources of moral and graphic combinations to his vigorous and reproductive imagination.

Salvator, like Horace*, performed the greater part of this journey on foot; and he is said to have arrived under the mouldering walls of Rome, in much the same plight as Bernardo Tasso had done before him, who entered "*La grande Roma*" with two shirts under one arm, and his "*Amadigi*" under the other. The whole wardrobe of Salvator was strapped to his back, and his whole fortunes deposited in the portfolio which gave it balance.

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* Of this first visit to Rome, Passeri, whose acquaintance with Rosa did not take place till some years afterwards, makes no mention: all his other biographers allude to it.

In entering the greatest city of the world at the Ave Maria, the hour of Italian recreation,—in passing from the silent desolate suburbs of San Giovanni to the Corso, (then a place of crowded and populous resort) where the princes of the Conclave presented themselves in all the pomp and splendour of Oriental satraps,—the feelings of the young and solitary stranger must have suffered a revulsion, in the consciousness of his own misery. Never, perhaps, in the deserts of the Abruzzi, in the solitudes of Otranto, or in the ruins of Pæstum, did Salvator experience sensations of such utter loneliness, as in the midst of this gaudy and multitudinous assemblage; for in the history of melancholy sensations there are few comparable to that sense of isolation, to that desolateness of soul, which accompanies the first entrance of the friendless on a world where all, *save they*, have ties, pursuits, and homes.

With none to receive and none to direct him, Salvator, guided by the instincts of po-

verty, retraced his steps from this gay quarter of the city, and sought one of those dreary "inns in the suburbs, many of which are formed out of the tombs of antiquity, affording an asylum, and but an asylum, to the indigent living*. Shortly afterwards Milton arrived in Rome, under very different circumstances. *He* was received by the learned and the noble, "*with the greatest humanity.*" Sonnets and distichs in his honour poured forth from the Roman muse; and Cardinal Barberini came forward to the door of his apartment to receive him, as princes only are received.

Milton and Salvator, who in genius, character, and political views, bore no faint resemblance to each other, though living at the

* "La voie Appienne, abandonnée aujourd'hui, dans la partie qui conduit de Rome à Albane, sur une longueur de trois lieux, n'est plus qu'une ligne droite tracée par deux files de tombeaux ruinés qui se touchent. J'en connois qui sont devenus des Cabarets."—*Bonstetten, Voyage dans le Latium.*

same time both in Rome and Naples, remained mutually unknown. The obscure and indigent young painter had, doubtless, no means of presenting himself to the great republican poet of England—if indeed he had then ever heard of one, so destined to illustrate the age in which both flourished.

In the early period of the seventeenth century, Rome, in preserving some of the exterior forms of her ancient grandeur, had lost the substance of that power which, partly derived from spiritual authority and partly from temporal dominion, had once nearly subjugated Europe, and paved the way to an universal monarchy of her pontiffs. In one half of the Christian world the power of Rome was now contemned; and if in the other half the head of the Roman Church was venerated as a father, there were those among his children who resisted him with reason and with success. Struggling for prerogatives once regarded as inalienable rights, upholding jurisdictions which

many considered but as long established abuses, the representatives of St. Peter continued to exhibit some semblance of their former supremacy; and by much pretension, deep policy, exquisite suppleness, and unwearied patience, they hid from the world, if not from themselves, the decay of their influence and the precariousness of their sway. All the Catholic kings, on their accession, still sent ambassadors to Rome, who were called "*di obedienza*," or of obedience. Every Catholic crown in Europe was represented by a member of the Conclave, who took the name of protector. The high society of the Christian metropolis consisted almost exclusively of these foreign ambassadors and the connexions and followers of the "*Dei Cardinaloni*;"* and the intrigues of the Conclave,† the disputes for precedence, and personal quarrels of the diplo-

* De Retz.

† Called by De Retz, "les finoteries du Conclave."

matic coteries*, afforded the only disturbance that broke upon the monumental tranquillity of the "Eternal City;" which the institutes of a fatal religion were rapidly depopulating, and which a resistance to the progressive improvements of the age, was separating from all European interests and illumination.

For the rest, Rome enjoyed a profound peace; and while the vilest corruption existed in the morals of the people, under a neglected internal police and the worst of domestic governments, the increasing passion for luxury and show, in the idle and worthless princes, and in the sumptuous and ambitious cardinals†,

* The factions of Spain and France, headed by their respective Cardinal Protectors, kept up a sort of civil war in the heart of the city, in which "*aigreurs et niaiserie*" were accompanied by open murders and secret assassinations.

† Cardinal de Retz, though in exile, was obliged to put eighty servants in livery, in order that he might not be "sur le pied des plus gueux des Cardinaux-moines," who could not go with less than this "Livrée roulante" to any of the functions.

united with public tranquillity to favour the arts, and to render Rome under Urban VIII, as she had been under Julius II. the great *studio* of Europe.

Maffeo Barberini, who in 1623 was elected pope under the title of Urban VIII, was in the full flower of his age, when Salvator Rosa arrived for the first time within view of the cupola of St. Peter's. Urban was a mere domestic Pope; bustling and interfering at home, but confining all his views abroad to the preservation of peace. He viewed with selfish indifference, or sought only to remove by fasts and prayers imposed on the people, the horrible ravages of famine and pestilence, which raged in the Roman States during the greater part of his reign. But he was full of active solicitude to provide against the probable attacks of his powerful neighbours, by fortifying the Quirinal, and furnishing the Vatican with an arsenal for four legions, destined to guard his infallible person. Cautiously avoiding

European politics, he directed all his views to Church diplomacy. He suppressed the Jesuits (1631), gave the cardinals the title of "Eminence," conferred on the Capuchins that of the "*true sons of St. Francis*," published a solemn bull against snuff-taking in church, and by his poetical effusions became the *magnus Apollo* of the antechambers of the Quirinal, where admiring Camerlinghi and obsequious Monsignori assigned him the adjunctive appellation of "*the Attic bee* *." But the passion of the pontifical poet for writing odes to Saints, and epigrams on sinners, did not interfere with his devotion to the arts, respecting which he was a true Barberini. An inordinate influx of wealth into the coffers of this powerful family, for which there were no other

* The "*Poemata Maffei Barberini*" are now little known, and are rarely to be found, except in a Roman library. "Nous avons de lui (Urban VIII.) un gros recueil de vers latins: et il faut avouer que l'Arioste et le Tasse ont mieux réussis."—*Voltaire.*

employments than the erection of palaces and villas, or the collection of works of art to adorn them, had rendered this family the titular patrons of most of the living artists; and the purchase which they had made of the ancient fief of Palestrina (the site of the wars of Sylla), from the illustrious but declining house of Colonna, had opened a new source of *virtù* to Italian *cognoscenti*. The excavations also carried on by the Barberini at Palestrina,* and the Mosaics found there, (the commencement of their celebrated collection,) had awakened in the wealthiest members of the family a passion for the arts, which reflected on almost all the living artists of the age.

The elevation of a Barberini to the pontifical throne was, therefore, supposed to promise "*un secol d'oro per la pittura*" (a golden age for painting); and the aspiring artists of the

* It was in these excavations that the Portland Vase was found, so long the ornament of the Barberini palace at Rome.

times, untaught by the melancholy fate of the Caracci, looked up to the protection of a particular family for that fortune which the suffrages of a public should alone bestow. Patronage, substituted for opinion, produced dependence, and palsied competition; and the exclusive influence of the Pope, cardinals, and princes of the Barberini family, threw the destiny of the arts into the hands of one, whose mediocrity and inordinate personal vanity rendered him the least proper for so arduous and important a situation.

Lorenzo Bernino, or Bernini, the son of a Florentine artist, a Neapolitan by birth, a sculptor, architect, and painter by profession*, was one of those extraordinary instances of precocity which never fail to astonish the shallow,

* He was born in 1598. His picture by Leone, done in his twenty-fifth year, exhibits him as a well-looking youth, with a certain air of audacity and self-possession extremely illustrative of his character.

which frequently impose on the profound, and which seldom realize in their maturity the promise of the premature excellence of their youth. A head sculptured by the clever boy at twelve years old, and placed by the vanity of his father for exhibition in the church of Santa Prassede at Rome, excited much attention; and Pope Paul V. (a Borghese) was talked into a curiosity to see the ingenious child. Presented at the Vatican, the little artist was ordered by the Pope, "by way of a joke," (*"come per ischerzo"*) says Bellori, to draw him a head with a pen. "What head would you have?" asked the unabashed boy. "Nay," said the Pope, "if I am only to ask and have, give me a St. Paul." A *beau idéal* of the head of St. Paul was sketched with rapidity; and, whatever was its merit, it was finished "*con sommo diletto e maraviglia del Papa,*" *to the great content and wonder of his Holiness.* The fortune of a boy who could delight and astonish a Pope, was thus laid upon the broad and sure foundation of all fortunes in

Rome. The Pope, as the price of a miracle by which he was so largely benefited, filled the hands of the tiny artist with golden medals; and, giving him up to the care of Cardinal Maffeo Barberini, said, in the child's hearing, "*Speriamo che questo giovinetto debbé diventaré il Michelagnolo del secolo.*" "Let us hope that this boy will become the Michael Angelo of the age." The prophecy was sufficient to defeat itself; and Bernini, beginning where he should have ended, became the greatest coxcomb, if not the greatest genius of his time. Dandled by cardinals, bequeathed as a legacy from pope to pope, adulated by the dependents of the Conclave, and eulogized by all the poets of the day, the young Bernini received a little fortune for every bust he executed, at the same age at which Guido was grateful to his patron (a tailor) for six *scudi* given him for one of his divine heads: yet, in the eyes of posterity, what a distance between Guido and Bernini!

The accession of Maffeo Barberini to the

pontifical throne crowned the fortunes of the lucky Lorenzo*; and one of the first acts of Urban VIII. was to create his favourite (already made a Knight of the Holy Roman Empire by Gregory XV.) architect to the Basilicum of St. Peter. His pensions were at the same time enormously increased, and his two brothers

* When Bernini presented himself to Urban, a few days after his elevation, the Pope addressed him in the following flattering manner: "È gran fortuna la vostra Bernini, di vedere Papa il Card. Maffeo Barberini; ma assai maggiore è la nostra, che il Caval. Bernini viva nel nostro pontificato." "It is a singular piece of good fortune for you, Bernini, to behold Maffeo Barberini Pope, but much more so for us to have Bernini living in our pontificate."—See *Bellori*.

There was a period, says Sir J. Reynolds, when to name Vandyke in competition with Kneller, was to incur contempt. The character of the eighteenth century in England resembled that of the seventeenth in Italy. It was the age of English mediocrity, the reaction of that powerful burst of national genius developed by the civil wars and the revolution.

were collated to benefices in the Lateran and St. Peter's. Diligent as he was ambitious, his indefatigable vanity led him to apply himself to all the arts. While he wrote childish verses with the Pope, whose ambition aimed at *blue* stockings no less than *red*, he pursued architecture, sculpture, and painting, with contemporary success*, far more brilliant than had ever been obtained by the more powerful and concentrated geniuses who had preceded him. A fawning courtier in the saloons of princes, Bernini was at Rome, like Le Brun in Paris, a tyrant to the arts. He saw no merit in the

* Louis XIV. invited Bernini to France, from which the ill-requited Poussin was so happy to escape. Bernini had, during his residence in Paris, five *louis* a-day, five thousand crowns as a *cadeau*, a pension of two thousand for himself and five hundred for his son; yet the designs he made for the Louvre were never made use of. This idle prodigality of kings is the result more of ignorance than of vice. If they usually know little of the arts, they are even *still less* aware of the value of money.

artist who did not bow down before the throne to which fashion and patronage had raised him. His disciples were his slaves; and of the many who sought his notice, few derived substantial benefits from his patronage; while years of anxious expectation and pining servitude were for the most part repaid only by a conviction of the fallacy of waiting on the capricious favour of a man whom fortune had spoiled, and whose overweening vanity obscured his better judgment and lessened the value of his talents.

When Salvator Rosa arrived at Rome, his prosperous countryman was in all the first flush of triumph at the completion and success of his great work, the Baldichino of St. Peter's,* which had cost the State for gilding alone an hundred

* The materials were torn from the Pantheon,—that Pantheon which M. Angelo would have deemed it sacrilege to touch! The difference between this Baldichino and the Cupola of St. Peter's gives the precise difference between the genius of Bernini and of M. Angelo; yet the

thousand golden scudi, and which was exposed to the public, on the feast of St. Peter, with religious pomp and dramatic effect. The splendid school of the Caracci had passed, or was passing away. Domenichino was living in solitude in the shades of Frescati, preparatory to his second fatal journey to Naples. Lanfranco was still in Naples, whence he only returned to die. Guido, whose morbid sensibility had been wounded to the quick by his would-be protector Cardinal Spinola, had re-

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latter died possessed of a bare sufficiency, and the former worth two millions. Bernini's fame fell with the age which gave it birth; and as an artist, the Italians of the present day place him in the same line with his friend Marino as a poet. The Baldichino, however, the Daphne and Apollo, the fountain of the Piazza Navona, and the noble Colonnade of the Vatican, are testimonies of a talent sufficient to justify the regret that its possessor should have descended to those littlenesses, which should only belong to envious mediocrity.

cently left Rome in disgust, and had retired to his native Bologna; where in his old age he enjoyed that noble independence he had struggled so hard through the precarious fortunes of his youth to obtain. Caravaggio had long before met his frightful death in the deserts of the Pontine Marshes. The great passions which had animated these lofty geniuses were stilled; and the energizing warfare of contending talents was succeeded by the blasting influence of patronage and the degrading arts of intrigue.

With much the same influence on the arts as their barbarous ancestors had exerted on the manners and habits of the Mistress of the world, "Gli Oltramontani," more generally known in Europe by the generic name of the *Flemish School*, had at this time acquired a celebrity in Rome. "*Quel genere baronesco*," as an Italian writer of the seventeenth century contemptuously denotes this school, included a race of

painters, who, issuing from the coarsest ranks of society in France,* Holland, Flanders, and the Low Countries, came to study in the galleries of Rome; and returned to their native homes† as little tinctured by the *beau idéal* of the sublime Roman masters in their works, as in their character and habits they were touched by the refinement of Italian manners.

Between the passionate, imaginative, and high-toned beings who filled the superior ranks of the arts in Italy, and the significantly named *Oltramontani*, there existed the same disparity in point of morals as in their respective styles

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* The French artists, though included in the term "Oltramontani," and though they deviated in many respects from the purity of the Italian schools, are not to be confounded with their Dutch and Flemish neighbours, either in respect of manners or style. This looseness of the Italian epithet tends to confound under one name things essentially distinct.

† With very few exceptions, of which Vandyke is the most conspicuous.

of painting. The "Aurora" of Guido and the "Fish-wife" of Durer, the grand action of Domenichino's painted Epics and the interior of Teniers's Pot-houses, the heaven that looked from the eyes of Raphael's "Saint Cecilia" and the oblique glance of Wander's grotesque *Bambocciate*, were not more contrasted than the views, thoughts, and manners of men, who equally saw Nature in all her truth, but saw her under different impressions, and seized her in different aspects.

The cause in which painting was first engaged in Italy had given an holy elevation to all that issued from its great schools; and those brilliant and lofty imaginations, which had dared to conceive and to represent the Divine presence, and who went no lower in the scale of creation than to paint those "*middle spirits*"

"Between th' angelic and the human kind,"

could see no merit in the well-depicted *viscera* of a dead fish, or the disgusting details of a

slaughter-house; while from the exhibition of the moral vices of the lowest of the people, or the infirmities and deformities of physical nature, however exquisitely or faithfully delineated, they turned revolted and abashed.* The manners and customs of the two Schools effected a still wider separation between their members. The Italian artists were elegant voluptuaries; more fastidious than intemperate, gallantry to excess was their master-vice; and their villas, their gardens, their superb costume, the care lavished on their persons, of whose beauty posterity may still judge in the galleries of Rome, Florence, and Bologna, were all rendered conducive to their dominant passion, to which religion herself stands indebted for the Magdalens and Madonnas with

* The remark of Sir J. Reynolds, "that the character of a nation is more marked by its taste in painting than by any other pursuit, however considerable," is here strictly applicable.

which love furnished her altars and her shrines.

The vice of the *Oltramontani* was that most opposed to gallantry — drunkenness *; and the quaint picture of these painters, left by the worshipper of Domenichino, illustrates at the same moment their habits, so new to Rome, and the impression they made on the fastidious minds of the Italian artists.† But

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* Salvator Rosa alludes to the drunkenness of the English and German artists in more places than one in his Satires.

"Imbriacar gli Inglese e gli Alemanni
Con il vino non già, &c. &c. &c.
. . . . . .
Andar con quei Fiaminghi alla Taverna
Che profanando in un la terra e l' Etere,
Han trovato un batismo alla moderna."

† "At this time" (says Passeri) "the Ultramontanes, according to their different nations, assembled together, the French with the French, the Dutch with the Dutch, the Flemish with the Flemish: and when money was rife,

while the Italians were loud and open in their expressions of disgust, not only at the brutal

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and one of their countrymen arrived at Rome, he was obliged to invite the whole band of his compatriots to a sumptuous feast, given at some of the most celebrated taverns. To these feasts every one contributed his share, though the novice was the principal paymaster. The recreation lasted twenty-four hours, at the least, without the parties leaving the table; for the wine was brought to them in hogsheads. This brawl they were wont to call the baptism. Their indiscretion in giving this holy appellation to their festivity arose from the circumstance of a new name being affixed on the novice, generally derived from some peculiarity in his face, figure, or demeanour. Peter Wander, who was ill-proportioned, was christened the *Bamboccio*, by which name he was ever after called."

Salvator Rosa has left on poetical record, not only his contempt for the vices, but for the ignorance and bad taste of these men, and his indignation at their having vitiated and degraded the noblest of the arts.

" Mira con quanti obbrobrj e quanti eccessi
Dagli artefici propri oggi s' oscura
Il più chiaro mestier che si professi."

La Pittura.

manners, but at the low, gross, and vile subjects which the Flemish school was introducing into the arts ("subjects," says one of their body, "which may amuse the people, but can never touch souls elevated by one noble idea"), this new style was received with universal approbation by the public. It *was new*, and it was *nature;* and the sympathies of the people were all in unison with its coarse but faithful and admirable representations of the scenes in which they most delighted, and the habits with which they were most familiar. Even the great caught the infection. The "*stilo Bambocciato*" became a fashionable caprice, and the superb galleries of princes and pontiffs were "infected with these *vilenesses*, fit only for pot-houses and taverns." * Interest, with

* "E questi quadri son tanto apprezzati
Che si vedon de' grandi entro gli studi
Di superbi ornamenti incorniciati."

La Pittura.

To this Passeri adds his prosaic and indignant testi-

its ever sure instincts, soon directed the talents, which were to live by the public, to the public predilections; and as many of the Italian artists as were not devoted to the manner of Raphael and the Caracci, or had not swelled the train of Bernini, became imitators of the Flemish School, and disciples and followers of Wander, and of Miele, at that epoch the most popular of its chiefs.*

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mony. "Non restavano però costoro di infettare alcune gallerie digne di gran personaggi con quelle viltà, che erano soltanto proprie da casali e da camere di locande." *Vita di Giov. Miele.*

* This embraces the whole secret. The Flemish painters (some blameable excesses of ill-taste apart) painted those objects which will ever be most interesting to nations who can boast of "a people;" subjects which, while they "prate of the whereabout" of real life, and call on the sympathies of the fathers and husbands of the laborious classes, are much better adapted for the small apartments of this portion of society, than historical pictures. It may be added, that dead fish and dead

From the followers of Bernini and the school of the Oltramontani, Salvator Rosa stood equally aloof. To have added his distich or sonnet to the tributary effusions offered to the "*arbitero delle belle arti*," the arbiter of the fine arts of the day,—to have joined the drunken brawls and rude wassailage of the Ultramontanes,—and to have employed a pencil, consecrated by Nature to her highest sublimity, upon the coarse delineation of vulgar life, would have been to follow the common path: but Salvator was not only morally, but physically, incapacitated for such a course; and his ardent temperament and contemplative mind still hurried him to objects consonant to the impulses of the one and the combinations of the other. Having visited the churches and

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game are at least not more offensive objects for familiar contemplation than murdered saints and tortured martyrs. Both schools had reason on their side; but neither, perhaps, could place itself in the proper situation for judging dispassionately of the other.

galleries *, and, with his usual impetuosity, decided at once in favour of Michael Angelo and Titian †, in whom he found nature and truth

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* "Comincia subito a andar vedendo le maravigliose pitture, e scolture, che in ricca copia l'adornano (Roma) &c. &c. &c."—*Pascoli.*

† Notwithstanding his great admiration of the genius of Michael Angelo, he disapproved of the *conception* of the Last Judgment, as not being sufficiently sublime; though the manner in which it was executed rendered it in his eyes a school of study. He has on this subject given his opinion freely in one of his Satires, for he never seems to have been daunted by a name, however great; nor dazzled by an authority, however antiquated. ‡

Michel Angelo mio, non parlo in gioco;
Questo che dipingete è un gran Giudizio,
Ma del giudizio voi n'avete poco.

My

‡ The nudity of the figures in Michael Angelo's Last Judgment had been objected to by a contemporary critic; and Michael Angelo's own friend, Lodovico Dolce, in his Dialogue on Painting, attacked him on this point with unsparing severity. Roscoe censures this accusation of Salvator's as hypercritical.

undisfigured by the ignorant anachronisms which shocked him even in the pictures of Raphael, he gave up his days and his nights to Ancient Rome. He was wont to climb the loneliest and the loftiest of her seven hills, and from the summit of Mount Aventine to sketch some great feature of desolation which the Rome of the Cæsars presented to his pencil. He loitered long and often in that noxious but interesting suburb, where stand in singular opposition the temple of Vesta and the house of Cola di Rienzi. He wandered along the infected shores of the Tiber, and kept pace with the fearful and wretched galley-slaves, who dragged some crazy vessel through the muddy stream, freighted with filthy rags (then the only exportation of the "World's great Mistress"); he

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My Michael Angelo, I do not jest,
Thy pencil a great judgment has express'd;
But in that judgment, thou, alas! hast shown
But very little judgment of thine own!!

Salvator Rosa, la Pittura.

visited those deserts into which the Porta Læone (the Trigemina of antiquity) conducts,—a spot consecrated to melancholy meditation, where the tomb of C. Cestius and the vast unfrequented Basilicon of St. Paul* seem to rise as landmarks of time on the boundaries of desolation. He penetrated mouldering ruins, and plunged into noxious excavations, insensible during the day to the effects of his perilous enterprise, but devoured by night, on returning to his dreary inn, by a parching fever, the inevitable consequence of that indiscretion which had exposed him to the *mal-aria* of the infected suburbs of Rome.

The rapid, but bold and splendid sketches he struck off at this period, were disposed of in the Piazza Navona, once the Circus of the Agonalia, and "now," says Evelyn (a con-

* Since the above was written, this most ancient and interesting church has been destroyed by an accidental fire, and its immense riches in antique marbles utterly destroyed.

temporary of Salvator's), "a *mercat for medals, pictures, and curiosities;*" or were sold or pledged to the Jews* of the Ghetto, then the mart of all brokerage and usury: for it appears that works bearing no name of fashionable notoriety were as little estimated in Rome as in Naples. To the ineffectual struggles which Salvator at this period made for a bare and miserable existence, he has himself unequivocally alluded in a cantata, which, though dashed with a splenetic humour and a caustic pleasantry, is still a feeling and a fearful picture of the trials to which genius and sensibility are exposed from their false position in an ill-organized society, founded on principles discordant with themselves, and at variance with the interests and the happiness of man.†

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* Baldinucci.

† Burney calls this poem a gloomy and grambling history of this painter's life, in which the comic exaggeration is not unpleasant. The music to which it is set,

CANTATA BY SALVATOR ROSA.

TRANSLATED.

No truce from care, no pause from woe,
Fortune,—for ever still my foe,
Seems not to know or to remember
I live and feel in every member;—
Am nerve, flesh, spirit, pulse, and core,
And throb and ache at every pore.
Yet from my first-drawn sigh, through life,
I've waged with fate eternal strife;
Have toil'd without reward or gain,
And woo'd the arts—but woo'd in vain.
For, while to Hope I fondly trust,
I scarce can earn my daily crust.
For me bright suns but vainly shine,
In vain the earth yields corn and wine.
Whene'er of peace I idly dream,
Discord is sure to rule supreme;
Ventures my little bark to sea?
Up springs a storm express for me;

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with the exception of the *refrain*, which is measured melody, is recitative. It is the composition of Bandini.

* See the original in Appendix.

My drench'd sails should I spread to dry,
Down pours a deluge from the sky;
Nay, should I seek those Indian plains
Whose sands are gold,—for all my pains,
I'd find transmuted into lead
The ore of the rich river's bed!
When, driv'n by Nature's pinching wants,
In the *Mercato's* coarse throng'd haunts
I higgling stand, spite of all care
I'm juggled of my frugal fare,
And find (my hard-made bargain done)
My pound of flesh, a pound of bone.
If forced I seek the princely state,
The domes of those we call the Great,
Corruption's self my bribes will slight,
And find my *buona mano* light.
While, as I saunter through the court,
I grow the jesting page's sport;
For threadbare cloaks meet no respect,
And challenge only cold neglect.
Out on my cloak! the very Jews
To take the paltry pledge refuse;
In every stall its credit's blown,
To the whole Ghetto too well known;
And they who buy all ends and fags
Will not accept my well-worn rags!

By night, by day, my harass'd mind
No rest, no peace, no balm can find.
My waking thoughts are thoughts of care;
My night-dreams—castles in the air!
While all around is pomp and state,
The meanest vessel gold, or plate,
No rood in country, shed in town,
Could I, alas! e'er call my own:
Rich but in hope, and when that 's fled,
An hospital reserves its bed.
In summer, when the dog-star glows,
I'm dress'd as though the Tiber froze.
For this you'll guess the ready reason—
I've but one suit for every season.
Yet, could I earn my daily pittance,
Fortune, I 'd make thee an acquittance;
I prize not toys; which ne'er should find
A place within the noble mind.
But my most ample means are scant
To meet life's simplest, humblest want.
Great God! yet "I'm a painter too,"
And can I find no cheering hue
To tinge this darksome sketch of life,
Where all is effort, evil, strife.
Oh no! one sombre tint pervades,
My verdure browns, my sunbeam shades,

Sheds o'er my scenes eternal gloom,
And dims their lights and chills their bloom.
Yet when my frozen spirits play,
And fancy lends a genial ray,
My pencil in its wanton sport
Brings the well-freighted bark to port;
Bestows fair sites on whom I please,
Raises rich leafy woods with ease;
But, of such varied wealth the maker,
I work and starve, without an acre.
Success, pursued, still seems to fly,
Hope's smile has still its kindred sigh;
Youth's joys are dull'd, its visions flown,
Yet friends still cry, " Hope and work on;"
" Hope still, starve still:"—to say the best,
This counsel 's but a sorry jest;
For, take it on Salvator's word,
Of the rich, noble, vulgar herd,
Few estimate, and few require,
The painter's zeal, the poet's fire.
The surest road to recompense
Is to conceal superior sense.
Better, far better meet our doom,
And sleep within the peaceful tomb,
Than cursed with wit, sense, worth, and spirit,
To trust to industry and merit—

Than live a beggar and a slave,
The scorn of every fool and knave.

The doom which the unfortunate painter so impatiently anticipated in this wild and melancholy production, was now apparently hastening to its crisis. The mental energy which had hitherto sustained him, sunk under the influence of physical infirmity; and the dreadful malady inflicted by the *mal-aria*, which had long preyed on his vigorous constitution, now stretched him senseless on his dreary couch. Friendless, pennyless, and obscure, it is probable that he owed the medical attentions which saved his life to one of the charitable institutions with which Rome abounds, and which arise out of that abuse which necessitates their existence. The "hospital bed" reserved for unprosperous genius, to which Salvator alludes, sanctions this melancholy supposition, though none of his biographers assert the fact. His life was preserved; but of his restoration to perfect health no hope was given, but from

the healing balm of his native air*. As soon as he was enabled to encounter the fatigue of the journey, he left Rome, more depressed in spirit and in circumstances than he had entered it. He had at least left Naples with hope and with health; he now returned to it blasted in both.

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* "Fu assalito da una continua febbre, per liberarsi dal quale gli fu d'uopo tornare a respirare l'aria nativa."—*Vita di S. Rosa.*

CHAPTER V.

1635—1639.

Arrival of Salvator in Naples.—State in which he finds his family.—Resumes his profession, and is opposed by the Neapolitan School.—Fails in procuring work.—Reduced to despair.—Is relieved by the friendship of Girolamo Mercuri, Maestro di Casa to Cardinal Brancaccia.—By his invitation Salvator revisits Rome.—Is sheltered in the palace of the Cardinal Brancaccia.—Pursues his art under discouraging circumstances.—Neglects entering into any of the reigning schools.—Studies in the Sistine chapel.—Impediments to his success, both natural and national.—Journey of the Cardinal Brancaccia to Viterbo.—Rosa taken in his train.—Paints the *Loggia* of the Episcopal palace.—Receives an order from the Cardinal to execute an altar-piece for the Chiesa della Morte.—Subject of the picture.—Becomes acquainted with the poet Antonio Abbati.—Salvator disgusted with his position in the Cardinal's family.—Returns to Naples.—Well received by Ancillo Falcone.—Paints his

celebrated picture of "*The Prometheus.*"—Account of that picture.—It is received into the annual exhibition at the Pantheon, held on the festival of San Giovanni Decollato.—Its brilliant success.—Salvator, at the instigation of Mercuri and Simonelli, returns to Rome.—Rejected by the Academy of Saint Luke.—Takes a house in the Via Babbuina. — Improvement of his fortune.—Opens a new path to notoriety in the Carnival of 1639.—His talents and success as an actor and improvvisatore. — Becomes the fashion. — Universally sought after for his social talents.—Private theatricals in Rome.—The old Italian Drama.—Sketch of the Sette Maschere d'Italia. —The modern Drama. — Theatre opened at the Vatican by Bernini.—Theatre opened in the Vigna di Mignanelli by Salvator Rosa.—Attacks the absurdities of Bernini.—Vengeance taken by Ottaviano Castelli in the theatre of the Borgo Vecchio.—The results.—Feeling of the public, and conduct of Salvator upon this occasion.

ON reaching the threshold of his native city, Salvator found that he had no longer, even there, a shed that he might call his own. His little family was dispersed under the exigencies of their necessitous position. His mother had

been charitably received under the indigent roof of her brother, Paolo Grecco *; and Francanzani and his wife were steeped deep in miseries, which hurried on the fate of that eminent genius, by plunging him into excesses, for which his despair was alone perhaps accountable.† Stunned as the susceptible mind of Salvator must have been by such an accumulation of evil, he yet attempted to parry

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* "Giulia Grecca la sua madre, che retirata s'era col fratello pittore per vivere."—*Pascoli.*

† Reduced to despair, Francanzani became careless of his art, and painted only for the common people, and in the coarsest manner. At last, becoming guilty of some capital crime (*rio da morte*), he was condemned to death; but he was not publicly executed, being poisoned in the dungeons of the Castello Nuovo, out of respect for the profession (*per rispetto al professione*). The crime of which he was accused remains as mysterious as its punishment. It was probably political, as he was engaged in the conspiracy of Masaniello.—See *Lanzi, Ticozzi, &c.*

the mass of affliction, which was inclosing him on every side, by the powerful resistance of genius energized by affection. He entered with fresh zeal upon the art he was almost on the point of abandoning in utter hopelessness, and applied himself once more with cheerful * and laborious diligence to his easel.

Triumphant in Salvator's failure at Rome, but annoyed at his return, the whole profession in Naples, with the exception of Falcone, rose against him. The freedom with which he still discussed the works of the mannerists, "*manieristi*," the epigram couched in every remark that dropped from his lips or his pen, kept alive the hatred which his uncompromising spirit had awakened, and which in all his poverty shamed the servility of the "*de-*

* "*Allegramente*" is the phrase applied by Pascoli to the cheeriness of spirit with which he resumed his profession at Naples.

pendants" of the art*, who had not blushed to assume an appellation which generically marked their degradation.† All his efforts to obtain an adequate price for his incomparable works were now unavailing; and after a fruitless struggle, all means of subsistence from the exertion of his splendid talents seemed wholly to vanish.

That his countryman Tasso had died in an hospital, afforded perhaps no solace, though it lent a precedent to the unfortunate Rosa, for the insufficiency of mere genius to succeed, in countries under the yoke of particular institutions. Thinking deeply, as men will think

* "In Napoli poco migliorò la sua fortuna, anzi, contrariato da quei pittori de' quali come troppo loquace di soverchio sparlava, gli mancarono intieramente le occasioni di lavorare."—*Vita di S. Rosa.*

† The disciples of Spagnuoletto were called "Suoi Dependenti."

who feel strongly*; environed on every side by importunate but successful mediocrity; beholding vice always prosperous, and crime secure of impunity, when protected by the garb of religion, or robed in the ermine of state, he took, even at this early period of life, his bitter but just view of society, which no after-prosperity could obliterate. In what deep characters this experience was engraven, his grand but terrible pictures, his severe but merited satires, evince!

The youth, the health, the spirits of Salvator were now fast yielding to the conviction of neglected merit and unavailing worth—the most insupportable of all inflictions—when an event occurred, which, though the least connected in appearance with a destiny so obscure, rescued him from despair, and threw a gleam of sunshine on the gloomy perspective of his

* "Les grandes pensées viennent toujours du cœur."
Voltaire.

future life. *Francesco Maria Brancaccia*, a noble Neapolitan and Bishop of Capaccio, was among the numerous cardinals created by Pope Urban VIII.; and being obliged by his promotion to attend the Court of Rome, and form an establishment upon that princely scale, of whose extravagance Cardinal de Retz so grievously complains, he sent to Naples for a young ecclesiastic, a dependent of his house, to take charge of his household ("*La Famiglia*,") and to fill the office, at that time so important in Rome, of *Maestro di Casa* to a prince of the Church. The young Padre Girolamo Mercuri had been a fellow-student with Salvator at the Collegio Somasco, and was then, as ever after, the most enthusiastic of his admirers. But, poor and dependent himself, his admiration hitherto had been as profitless as it was ardent.

His promotion, however, to the dignity of first domestic in the household, of a "*gran porporato*" (a situation coveted by ecclesiastics of much higher rank than that of the un-

beneficed Girolamo), was an unexpected influx of fortune, whose tide he generously sought to turn to the purposes of friendship. He invited Salvator to accompany him to Rome, and held out such inducements to his hopeless countryman, as easily persuaded him to try once more his fortune in the great European market of the arts. In company with some other young Neapolitan adventurers, Rosa embarked on board a felucca, and in the latter end of the year 1635 returned to Rome. There, however, he no longer found himself a friendless stranger. Kind arms were now extended to receive him; and an hospitable roof afforded him at least a temporary shelter *.

* Of the circumstances of this second journey to Rome, Pascoli seems as ignorant, as Passeri was of the first. His account of Salvator at this period is, that he arrived at Rome, for the second time, in his twenty-fourth year, and painted already "*da Maestro*:" but not having any introduction, he was obliged to sell his pictures to brokers and petty shopkeepers, who seeing the genius

Girolamo Mercuri, who is described as one "*chi fu sempre uomo onorato ed amorevole,*" (who was always an honourable and benevolent man,) was not the only friend whom Salvator found in the Brancaccia palace. The Cardinal's guardaroba, Signor Nicola Simonelli, an ecclesiastic and noted preacher of the day, was also a Neapolitan; and from the moment of his introduction to his ingenious countryman, he became, in the technical language of the times, "*suo parziale,*" (his protector or partisan). It appears that the excellent Girolamo Mercuri not only received Salvator with "*carezze grande,*" but assigned him an apartment in the vast palace of his master, which

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displayed in these exquisite productions, and observing that their author was unknown and without funds, contrived to conceal his very existence, till Salvator, discovering the artifice, made himself known, by entering the service of the Cardinal Brancaccia. Passeri's account, however, who appears to have made the acquaintance of Salvator about this time, may be received in preference.

perhaps even then, as in the present day, might have been but half inhabited, and capable of sheltering, unknown to its lord, many houseless and indigent refugees.

The image of Salvator now presents itself, as of one occupying a remote and deserted room marked by a faded and dreary splendour, and destitute of all comfort and accommodation. Labouring with unabated, though as yet unrequited, diligence, he was obliged to recur to his own fine and flexible figure, reflected in a large dusky mirror, for the models he was unable to procure*. He was not, however, the less devoured by an ambition for distinction; and he worked not less to obtain a name, than to supply the exigencies of the passing day, ("*tanto per cagione di vivere, quanto per introdursi nelle cognizione di tutti*). But it was in vain that he produced those

* Baldinucci asserts he never after made use of any other model for his male figures: the grace, spirit, and mobility of his own were all sufficient.

beautiful cabinet-pictures called his "*quadretti*," fine combinations of that vast stock of imagery he had accumulated in his *peripatetic* study of nature, and animated them by living figures full of moral effect and human interest. His galley-slaves, his bandits, his way-worn travellers, his shipwrecked mariners, his armed cavaliers, though allowed to be executed "*di buon gusto*" by contemporary umpires, were still deemed in themselves ignoble subjects by the academic pedantry of one class of virtuosi; while by another class, who saw no merit beyond the delineation of a Dutch kitchen, or a market brawl, they were censured as wild and extravagant.* The friends of Salvator in vain recommended to him the usual routine which led to fashion and success in Rome, and advised him to enter one of the reigning schools of the day, to enlist himself under the banners

* "Erano però, figurine piccole, e tele non molto grandi toccate mirabilmente con tinte grate e di buon gusto, ma di soggetti vili, cioè baroni, galeotti, e marinari."—*Passeri.*

of Andrea Sacchi, Pietro Cortona, Nicolas Poussin, or, greater than all, the Cavalier Bernini!

At this period many of the galleries of the virtuosi and of the leading artists were open during the winter evenings to the young students of Rome. They were effectively lighted, and supplied with living models; and to the congress of students thus assembled, the name of "*accademia*" was given. Domenichino had first introduced this mode in Rome for the benefit of his own pupils; and Nicolas Poussin and other foreign artists had been proud to avail themselves of the advantage of working under the eye of the greatest painter of the age. Since the fortunes of Domenichino had "*fallen into the sear*," and he had taken up his residence in Naples, the most fashionable *accademia* in Rome was the studio of Andrea Sacchi, where a certain "Caporale Leone," a military Apollo, and a living rival *of him of the Belvidere*, presented one of the finest models, for the grace and spirit of his attitudes

that art had ever studied. But Salvator frequented none of these associations, which belonged more to the pretensions of the modern school, than to the genius of the old masters. When not shut up in his solitary workroom in the Brancaccia palace, he was transfixed in the Sistine chapel before the gigantic splendours of Michael Angelo's Last Judgment. This he was wont to call his school of anatomy; and though enthusiastic in his admiration for Titian's colouring, the genius of Michael Angelo was that with which his own alone associated. If he followed any school save that of nature, it was the school of this his great prototype, whose "Three Fates" in the Palace Pitti at Florence, might pass for the "Weird Sisters" of Shakspeare, or "The Sorceresses" of Salvator Rosa.

While all the artists of the age were following particular masters, or copying each other, Salvator added one rule to that catalogue which they venerated, and he despised,—that is,—not

to be confined to any rule: and his pictures exhibited in the shops of the Roman *rivenditori*, while they startled the precise judgments of professional critics, obliged them to invent a specific term for such unauthorized and eccentric productions: they called them his "*Capricci.*" If, as it is observed by one whose opinions on the arts are oracular, "if the very foundation of the art of painting be invention, and if he who most excels in that high quality must be allowed to be the greatest painter, in what degree soever he may be surpassed by others in the more inferior branches of the art," * Salvator Rosa, even at this period, when he was known only by the ludicrous appellation of "*Il Salvatoriello,*" was one of the *first*, because one of the most original painters of his age or country.

But whatever were the professional merits of Rosa, he, in an eminent degree, wanted the more appreciable personal merit of *duc-*

* Sir J. Reynolds.

tility. He neither would nor could, (says one of his biographers) "*accommodarsi al corteggio delle anticamere,*" (submit himself to the dangling in antechambers), and his stiff and unbending temper left him, after some months' residence in Rome, without so much patronage as would procure him the painting of a "*sopra porta,*" in any of the most inferior churches of the Trastevere.*

His good friends Mercuri and Simonelli were themselves strangers in Rome, and natives of a country equally feared and hated by the Roman Court. They could only have assisted him in a manner from which, to judge by the

* *Sopra porta*, the space over a door.—Even Salvator's country was against him; for Naples, like Ireland, imprinted a stigma on all she sent forth. "S'il y a en Italie une nation qui soit portée à une réforme, ce sont les Neapolitains; temoin, les prisons de l'Inquisition, qui sont remplis de personnes de leur nation. Car, on peut dire hardiment que de dix qui sont accusés à ce tribunal, il y en a neuf qui sont de Naples ou du Royaume."—*Voyage Historique d'Italie*, 1719.

sentiments on pecuniary matters expressed in his own letters, his pride must have revolted. How little these two amiable ecclesiastics had been able to push him on in his profession, is evinced by their having pressed him to leave Rome, and accompany them on a visit they were about to make with their "*eminentissimo padrone*" to Viterbo. The Cardinal Brancaccia had been recently made Bishop of that diocese, and, in obedience to ecclesiastical etiquette, was obliged to visit his see, and perform service in its venerable cathedral. Salvator accepted this invitation of his friends, because (says Passeri) "*non aveva ricapito in Roma,*" he had no other asylum in Rome than the Cardinal's now deserted palace.

It was this terrible consciousness of not having "*where to lay his head,*" save as the charity of friendship allotted him an eleemosynary shelter, which probably inspired those lines which he has woven into one of his bitterest satires :

"Virtude oggì neanmeno ha tanta paglia
Per gettarsi a giacere, e a borsa sciolta
Spende l'oro dei re, turba che raglia."*

The luxury and magnificence of the "*Porporati*" of Rome was at this period carried to an excess, which royalty could not surpass. The journey of a Cardinal to his diocese, or when on a diplomatic mission, resembled the royal progress of a travelling sovereign, rather than the journey of a subject. In Italy they were generally accompanied by a train of an hundred domestics, including in this denomination their chaplains, and the ecclesiastics comprised in their household. Their carriages were all glass and gold, with silver springs and velvet linings; and their sumpter-mules were laden with rich furniture and with bedsteads,† which were

* "While prodigality showers wealth upon public singers, genius can scarcely procure a sheaf of straw to rest upon."—*La Musica.*

† "Which gratification the Italians much glory in, as did our grandfathers in England, in their inlaid wooden ones."—*Evelyn's Memoirs.*

sometimes composed of solid silver set with precious stones, and provided with mattresses of eider-down; while a troop of cavalry brought up their rear,—no unnecessary accompaniment to the well-laden caravan.

The unfortunate painter, in feeling the humility of his position with all the bitterness and acrimony of proud but neglected genius, may yet have considered this splendid and graphic *cortège*, as it wound up the romantic heights of Viterbo, with a painter's eye. The clerical habits of the monkish *Camerieri*, the broad green hats of the *Capellini*, which distinguished them from the inferior members of "*the family*," the gallant bearing of the gaily-dressed *staffieri*, the sumpter-mules, with their gaudy trappings and merry bells, and the armed guard which closed the procession, tinged with the lights of a brilliant sunset on the *entrée* of one of the most picturesque cities of Italy, must have presented images so consonant to Salvator's views and feelings, as to have cheered

his spirits and stolen him from the contemplation of his own hapless situation. Yet, even then, one prophetic thought may have crossed his mind, that the high and mighty prince, to whom he was too insignificant even to be known, might be rescued from oblivion, and reach posterity through the accident which connected the name of Brancaccia with that of Salvator Rosa.

It is usual with the members of the Conclave, when visiting their distant dioceses, to throw off much of the state and ceremony they are compelled to assume at Rome; and (obliged by the narrowness of the circle) to live on a more intimate and familiar footing with the officers of their household, in order to avoid that *ennui* which is the tax of all unoccupied grandeur. It was possibly from this circumstance that the zealous *Maestro di Casa* was enabled to present to his eminence the painter who had so long occupied a deserted attic in his palace. The Cardinal was much pleased (*molto contento*)

with the new member of his establishment, and sufficiently satisfied with what he saw of his drawings to give him the portico and the "*Loggia*" of the episcopal palace to paint in fresco. The subject was left to Salvator's own selection; and, obliged to consult the genius of the place, which by its publicity was ill-adapted either to sacred or profane history, Salvator chose a subject purely poetical, the "*scherzo de' mostri marini*," the "idle disport" of marine deities floating on sunny seas, or mounted on the backs of sportive dolphins. This piece, though not deemed among the most perfect productions of its author, had yet sufficient merit in the eyes of his new patron to induce him to bespeak the grand altar-piece for the *Chiesa della Morte* of Viterbo at the hands of Salvator*. This was

* At this period, and not before, Pascoli supposes that Rosa "*s' accomodò al servizio del Cardinal Brancaccia suo paesano*," accepted service under his countryman the Cardinal.

the first and last public work ever assigned to him in the Roman States by a member of the government. The Cardinal again left him the choice of his subject, and he chose the incredulity of St. Thomas,—a bold and perilous theme! Salvator seized that moment in the life of the sceptical saint, in which, having said, "except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hands into his wounds, I will not believe," he finds himself called upon by his divine master to bring his doubts to the proof. The figures were, in the technical phrase, "*di grandezza naturale*," large as life.

This historical picture, though only the second he had ever executed, and the first on a great scale, was declared by the critical umpires of a succeeding age, to be painted "*con qualche gusto*," with *some* taste. This faint praise was, however, confined to the mechanical execution. The intellect which suggested the choice of subject was not appreciated by the

canting virtuosi*, who overlook in Salvator those first requisites of an historical painter, —great mental powers, and a facility of combination which always rendered him the painter of the philosophy of human nature.

While mounted on his platform before the high altar of the church "*della Morte*," he attracted the attention of one of those loungers to whose idle intrusions all the churches of Italy are liable. His splenetic pleasantry, his epigrammatic turns, seem to have had a peculiar charm for this unknown acquaintance, whose habit bespoke him of some rank in the Church, and who soon became a fixture at the "*altare maggiore*."

The charm of Salvator's conversation, which had first attracted the stranger, was succeeded

* The disgust expressed by Sterne at professional criticism must be participated by every person of strong feeling and good sense who visits Italy. At every step one is inclined to repeat "*Of all the cants*," &c.

by another of still greater effect. One of the most delightful *causeurs* of his day (on the testimony of all his contemporaries) was also one of the *best listeners;* and the daily visitor of the Chiesa della Morte found, perhaps, the only willing auditor in Viterbo for his eternal recitations of his own verses. This visitant was the Della Cruscan Abbate *Antonio Abbati,* a genuine *seicentisto,* and one of the fashionable poets of the day, whose sonnets without sentiment, and epigrams without point, procured him a contemporary reputation in the blue-stocking coteries of that age of literary feebleness and fatuity. Such names as the Abbate's just serve in the present day to fill up the lists of the pains-taking Tiraboschis and Crescembenis, which preserve with faithful accuracy all the authors

> "Of all such reading as was never read."

It has been remarked by many as singular, that Salvator never once attempted to repay

the Abbate Antonio in kind. After the lapse of years, when Abbati returned from Germany, where he had long resided, and found Salvator's fame as a poet far beyond his own, "*si stupeva,*" says Passeri, he was astonished. But he was much more surprised at the modesty and forbearance of the young painter, than capable of appreciating the merits of his singular and highly poetical satires.*

The frescoes of the episcopal palace, (the only frescoes which Rosa ever executed,) the grand altar-piece of the Chiesa della Morte, and some exquisite *quadretti,* which from time to time he sent from Viterbo to the Roman market, were now gradually, though slowly, opening the way to that brilliant reputation, which Salvator is described as seeking with

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* Pascoli, however, says, that the Abbate's admiration of the literary talents of his young friend, induced him to correspond with him for some time after he left Viterbo, and on all occasions to seek him out.

fretful impatience, and with a scarcely-repressed indignation; when his savage independence appears to have taken alarm at the obscure and humiliating position he was gradually assuming in the household of the Cardinal Brancaccia. Between the frank and friendly attentions of his college companion and equal, Mercuri, and the dependence of the "*creato*" of a great personage, there was a difference clearly appreciable by one whose spirit was as free as the elements he delighted to paint, and wild as the regions he loved to haunt. In leaving the protection of the Cardinal, Salvator may have been influenced by circumstances which never reached the knowledge even of his most active biographers. Patronage, which is made for mediocrity, is never an atmosphere for the free breathings of genius. He who through life had said that "liberty was beyond price, and that the honours and wealth the world could give would not

purchase him*," may have felt the weight of the first chain he ever wore, however lightly it may have lain. It is easy to charge the protected with ingratitude; but who, save the victim, *can* know the daily, hourly, little grievances inflicted by the caprice of wealthy pride upon the object of its degrading protection; which, if "*patient* merit of the unworthy take," the *impatient* pride of the highest order of sensibility spurns, at every risk; a word, a look, even a gesture, from the haughty *porporato*, may have been sufficient to have stirred up the "bile," roused the "spirit," kindled the "fire" of one, who has described himself as wholly made up of such unquiet elements.

But, however this may have been, Salvator Rosa, after a year's residence in the Episcopal palace of Viterbo, departed, not for Rome, but, to the astonishment of all, for Naples.

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* Pascoli.

For this singular return to a country where he had only to expect the persecution of enemies and the neglect of friends, his biographers assign a reason, connected equally with his affections and his interests,—namely, that he was preyed upon by the *maladie du pays*, and influenced by a hope that his absence, at Rome, might have raised his pictures in the estimation of a capricious public, easily satiated with works whose author is always within the reach of a command.*

Whether the distinction conferred upon him by the protection of the Cardinal Brancaccia, or the increase of his reputation at Rome from the circulation of his small pictures, were influential in procuring him a better reception at Naples, than his genius had yet obtained for him, does not appear; but that he sustained a superior post in his native country during this

* Pascoli simply says, "Gli cadde in animo di rivedere la patria, e, preso da lui congedo, si messe in camino."

visit, to any he had ever before arrived at, is attested by most of his biographers.*

The hostility of the painter faction was now entirely directed against its great victim Domenichino, who, urged by his necessities, had once more returned to Naples; and Ancillo Falcone, who alone took no part in the disgraceful illiberality of his brother artists, renewed his friendship with Salvator Rosa, and now perhaps first discovered that identity of feeling and opinion upon subjects of deeper interest than the arts, which so intimately united them in the fearful events of a future day. For the present, however, the ambition of Salvator was all directed to Rome, to the obtaining, by force of superior genius alone, the suffrages of her refined public, and of those fastidious virtuosi

* Pascoli alone says, that he was deeply disappointed by his reception in Naples; and that his mortified feelings at the insensibility of his countrymen induced him, for the *third time*, to leave that city.

who assembled from all parts of Europe in congress within her walls. From time to time he continued to send his pictures to his friends Mercuri and Simonelli, whose zeal in his cause increased with the gradual developement of his genius, and who had long desired for their countryman a distinction, which intrigue and influence, rather than merit, were calculated to obtain.*

A company, or, in the Italian phrase, a *congregation* of virtuosi had instituted two public exhibitions of pictures at Rome, upon the feasts of Saint Joseph and of Saint John, *(San Giovanni Decollato)*. The exhibition, which had the *virtù* of Europe for its spectators, was held at the Pantheon. It had become an arena, in which the rival geniuses of Rome had

* It is probable that, during this second visit to Naples, he painted his Saint Nicola de Bari in the church of the Chartreux of San Martino, where he had formerly exercised his talents with his burned sticks.

to contend, not only with each other, but with the great masters who had preceded them, and whose *chefs-d'œuvre* the Roman nobility, in all the pride of property, were wont to transfer on these occasions from the galleries to the Pantheon.*

Where so many competitors presented themselves, patronage and influence naturally interfered; and every "*Mecenate*" (Mæcenas) had one or more dependents to recommend to the congregation, which, like other congregations, was swayed in its elections by its own interests, and the power and rank of protecting patrons. Salvator Rosa, who had no "*Mecenate*," and was no man's *dependente*, made no effort to enter the already over-crowded lists. A picture, however, which he sent from Naples for sale, to his friend Nicola Simonelli, made

* Salvator complains of this in his letter to Riccardi thirty years afterwards, when he had reached the summit of his ambition.

its own claim on the suffrages of the congregation, to whom the zealous Simonelli presented it; and the "*Prometheus*"* of Salvator took its place by the side of the *capi d'opera* of Titian and Leonardo da Vinci, effacing all the contemporary productions which surrounded it.†

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* Besides prose criticisms and commendations of "The Prometheus," a poetical eloge was published with the signature of "The Demosthenes of Painting," and supposed to be written by Simonelli. Passeri calls this picture "un Tizio lacerato dall' Avoltojo," Tityus torn by the Vulture. The fate of the giant and of Prometheus is so similar, that the picture may answer for either; but the beautiful figure of the sufferer has nothing gigantic in its proportions: it is all human symmetry and human suffering.

† The following description of this noble picture by Mongé, is equally characteristic of the work and its author:—

"Si l'on demandait ce que les artistes entendent par *la fougue*, il serait plus simple de présenter les ouvrages de S Rosa, que de chercher une définition. Celle-ci ne saurait concevoir qu'imparfaitement la fièvre d'imagination

This picture, which gave "*una fama strepitosa al nome del S. Rosa,*" a decided reputation to the name of Salvator, cancelled for ever the

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désignée par le mot *fougue;* tandis que tout la rétrace chez le peintre Napolitain. . . . Ici Prométhée enchainé sur les sommets du Caucase, voit un aigle déchirer son foie toujours rénaissant. Ses membres contractés annoncent les douleurs atroces qu'il endure. On croit entendre les échos de ces âpres rochers redire ses mugissemens. Une figure seule, isolée, souffrante, captive toute notre attention. Ce n'est donc pas les graces, le mouvement, le grand nombre de figures, qui produisent l'intérêt dans les arts: l'expression est tout. Le reste n'est souvent qu'un prestige mal-adroit qui décéle l'empressement et la froideur de l'imagination."

Notwithstanding the agony impressed in the features of Prometheus, nothing can be more beautiful or sublime than "the patient energy" of the countenance. The mouth is that of the Apollo Belvidere, something distorted by pain. The wound made by the vulture is small, but, as Passeri observes, sufficiently large to shew the injured intestine. The ânatomy of this figure is worthy of Michael Angelo; and its moral expression equally

diminutive of *Salvatoriello*, modestly affixed to it. All Rome was occupied with praising its beauties or decrying its faults. Envy and admiration were perpetually employed in analyzing its pretensions to the public suffrages. But the public, with its sure instinct, decided in favour of the laborious Salvatoriello of the *rivenditori* of the Piazza Navona; and the

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worthy of him, whose *own Prometheus* is drawn under the same inspiration as directed the pencil of Salvator.

"A silent suffering, and intense—
The rock, the vulture, and the chain!
All that the proud can feel of pain.
The agony they do not shew,
The suffocating sense of woe,
Which speaks but in its loneliness;
And then is jealous lest the sky
Should have a list'ner, nor will sigh
Until its voice is echoless—"

The Prometheus of Lord Byron.

This picture afterwards became one of the chief ornaments of the Corsini palace, where it now is.

fame of the future historical painter was laid upon the firm basis of the public opinion.

The echo of the applauses which rose under the dome of the Pantheon, reached Salvator in his remote work-room in Naples; and the entreaties of his friends Mercuri and Simonelli for his return were so warm, their accounts of his success so brilliant, that (says Passeri,) Rosa "*prese animo di così grata e gradita relazione,*" took courage from such pleasing news, and, once more bidding adieu to Naples, arrived in Rome ere the sensation awakened by his Prometheus had subsided. Neither the merit, however, of the picture, the genius of the artist, nor the exertions of the few and uninfluential friends his talents had raised up for him, could procure his entrance into the *accademia* of St. Luke—then an indispensable distinction even for the first artists, but which even the dullest mediocrity, when backed by influence, never failed to obtain.

Salvator was struck to the soul by the in-

justice of his rejection; but, like the statues of Brutus and Cassius in the funeral procession of Junia, he was, perhaps, only the more conspicuous for this exclusion. His bettered fortunes, however, though but comparatively good, now enabled him to indulge in the master-passion of his existence,—independence. He declined the eleemosynary home, which he still could command in the uninhabited vastness of the Brancaccia palace, and for the first time became the master of a shed which he could call his own. He hired a house in the Via Babbuina, close to the fountain from which it takes its name, and near to the Strada Margutta. His first household acquisition was singular for an Italian, and one so young,—he collected books, and with very small means acquired a tolerable library. "With his books," says Pascoli, "and his pencil, he now passed his time; while his poetry, and the spell of his fascinating conversation drew around him some of the young literati and artists, whose taste for music

and poetry, and whose habits of life, assimilated with his own." *

With this little band he formed the "*crocchio ristretto*," the select circle, which the Italians love so much, and in which the subjects of despotic governments find their sole indemnification for the absence of those public assemblies only tolerated in free countries. The centre of his own circle, Salvator's superior intellect soon raised him above the equality of companionship. From an associate he became a chief; and men who were afterwards notable in arts, science, and literature, were then distinguished by the appellation of "his followers."

But the admiration which he awakened in the enlightened few who surrounded him, rendered him only the more restless and impatient under the slowness of his progress to

* "Tirò per mezzo di sue rime, e della sua suave e dolce conversazione, alcuni giovani coetanei a un intima amicizia, e se rende talmente padrone degli animi loro, che ne faceva ciò che voleva."—*Pascoli.*

that high position in his profession, which, even then, he deemed himself worthy to take beside the first masters of his age. His exquisite PROMETHEUS had brought more applause than profit. He had still to contend with the empirics of the Academy, who saw no merit in the man that belonged to no school, whom no Cardinal recommended as his "*creato*," and to whom no Prince assigned the symbolic representation of his own virtues on the ceilings of his palace.

In the midst of his private intellectual enjoyments and public professional mortifications, arrived the Carnival of the year 1639; and Salvator, for once flinging aside his palette, and locking up his *studio*, suddenly resolved to open for himself a new career of fashionable notoriety, and to start for the goal by a path, the least obviously calculated to lead to success.*

* "Rendendosi impaziente per non vedere quello che più desiderava di grido, e di acclamazione, gli venne in pensiero per far maggiore apertura alla cognizione della sua persona, di introdursi," &c.—*Passeri.*

Whether he thus acted in utter recklessness of a world he contemned, or from his painfully earned experience of its inconsequence and frivolity, the result of his new speculation was favourable beyond what the doctrine of probabilities could have anticipated.

Much of the splendour and ingenuity which distinguished the Carnival festivities of the Middle Ages was still in fashion in Italy. Poets, philosophers, and statesmen — artists, musicians, and mechanists—contributed to the celebration of the Christian Saturnalia. The ancient "*Canti Carnascialeschi*" of Francesco Grazini, so much in vogue in the days of Lorenzo de' Medici, had been succeeded by the "*Carnavaleschi*" of one whose name had reached posterity by works of a far different character: and the Carnival poems of Machiavel* were still recited in the streets of Flo-

* Machiavel, affecting the Greek model, introduced into these compositions a chorus, and he formed it of bands of devils, the then necessary accompaniment to all human agency.

rence by groups of fantastic maskers, habited as ghosts, bandits, monks, nymphs, and satyrs; while his "Prince" was the study of Europe, and its hidden purport the enigma which puzzled alike the tyrant and the slave to solve.

In Rome the Carnival, more joyous, and even more fantastical than in Florence, was of a ruder character, and was occasionally rendered, through the influence of the Papal government, the medium of the most fearful bigotry.* But the popular entertainment on these occasions was called "*Le Zingaresche*," and consisted of comic dialogues, in which a gipsy, or a group of gipsies, engaged in a

* The particular *Rioni*, or quarters of Rome, were noted for giving, during the Carnival, mock exhibitions of the trials and execution of Jews. The stages on which these sanguinary scenes were enacted were drawn by oxen. The actors appeared to hang, strangle, or torture the unfortunate victims of Christian hatred after the manner of the Inquisition, for the edification of the faithful. These representations were called "*Le Giudiate.*"

"fierce encounter of the wits," and told fortunes, revealed love-secrets, and exercised the craft of legerdemain with what skill they might. These dialogues gradually assumed a dramatic form, and were rather sung than spoken, to such accompaniment on the guitar as the ambulatory troop could procure.

In the early part of the seventeenth century, an elegant innovation in the Carnival festivities of Rome was introduced by Quagliate, the composer, which is notable as the first secular musical drama, or opera, ever exhibited in that city, and as giving an idea of the higher festivities of the Carnival at the particular period when Salvator Rosa became one of its most brilliant ornaments.

"My master Quagliate," says the quaint and amusing traveller Della Valle, "introduced a new species of music into the churches of Rome, not only in compositions for a single voice, but for two, three, four, and often more voices in choruses, ending with a numerous crowd of many choruses singing together,

specimens of which may be seen in many of his *motets* that have been since printed; and the music of my car, or *moveable*, during the Carnival, composed by the same Quagliate in my own room, chiefly in the manner he found most agreeable to me, and performed in masks through the streets of Rome during the Carnival of 1606, was the first dramatic action or representation in music that had ever been heard in that city. Though no more than five voices or five instruments were employed, (the exact number which an ambulant car could contain,) yet these afforded great variety; as, besides the dialogue of single voices, sometimes two or three, and at last all five sang together, which had an admirable effect. He pleased the public so much, that there were some even who continued to follow our car to ten or twelve different places where it stopped, and who never quitted it as long as we remained, which was from four o'clock in the evening until midnight."

Towards the close of the Carnival of 1639, when the spirits of the revellers (as is always the case in Rome) were making a brilliant rally for the representations of the last week, a car, or stage, highly ornamented, drawn by oxen*, and occupied by a masked troop, attracted universal attention by its novelty and singular representations. The principal personage announced himself as a certain Signor Formica, a Neapolitan actor†, who, in the cha-

* Evelyn, who visited Rome in 1645, speaking of the Carnival, observes of these Thespian carts: "One thing is remarkable—their acting comedies on a stage placed in a cart, or plaustrum, where the scene, or tiring place, is made of bushes in a rural manner, which they drive from street to street with a yoke or two of oxen, after the ancient guise."

† It was at this time the fashion, both in France and Italy, for all actors to appear before the public with a "*nom de guerre*," and to conceal their own. Jean Baptiste Poquelin has immortalized that of Moliere by assuming it in one of his earliest dramatic campaigns. "*Il ne fit*, (says Voltaire,) *en changeant de nom, que suivre l'exem-*

racter of Coviello*, as a charlatan, displayed so much genuine wit, such bitter satire, and exquisite humour, rendered doubly effective by a Neapolitan accent, and "*i motivi dei lazzi nazionali*," or national gesticulations, that

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ple des Comédiens d'Italie, et de ceux de l'hotel de Bourgogne. L'un, dont le nom de famille étoit Le Grand, s'appelloit Belville dans la tragédie, et Turlepin dans la farce. Arlequin et Scaramouche n'étoient que les noms de théatre."

* Coviello, one of the "seven masks" of Italy, or national dramatic characters, is the theatrical representative of the *Calabrians*. The wit of Coviello, therefore, is supposed to be sharp as the air of his native Abruzzi. Adroit and vain-glorious, a Proteus in character, language, and manner, he still preserves his native accent and habit; and his black velvet jacket and pantaloons, studded with silver buttons and rich embroidery, were well calculated to set off the handsome person of the wearer, if he happened to possess one, and to give to his figure a certain air of elegance, strongly contrasted with his conventional mask, with its crimson cheeks, black nose and forehead. Salvator's reasons for choosing this character (always popular in Rome) are obvious.

other representations were abandoned; and gipsies told fortunes, and Jews hung, in vain. The whole population of Rome gradually assembled round the novel, the inimitable Formica. The people relished his flashes of splenetic humour, aimed at the great; the higher orders were delighted with an *improvvisatore*, who, in the intervals of his dialogues, sung to the lute, of which he was a perfect master, the Neapolitan ballads, then so much in vogue. The attempts made by his fellow-revellers to obtain some share of the plaudits he so abundantly received, whether he spoke or sung, asked or answered questions, were all abortive; while he (says Baldinucci) "*come capo di tutti, e pur spiritoso, e ben parlante, con bei ghiribizzi e lazzi spiritosi teneva a se mezza Roma*," at the head of every thing by his wit, eloquence, and brilliant humour, drew half Rome to himself."* The contrast between his beautiful

* He collected about him, says Passeri, the whole of

musical and poetical compositions, and those Neapolitan gesticulations in which he indulged, when, laying aside his lute, he presented his vials and salves to the delighted audience, exhibited a versatility of genius, which it was difficult to attribute to any individual then known in Rome. Guesses and suppositions were still vainly circulating among all classes, when, on the close of the Carnival, Formica, ere he drove his triumphal car from the Piazza Navona, which, with one of the streets in the Trastevere, had been the principal scene of his triumph, ordered his troop to raise their masks, and, removing his own, discovered that Coviello was the sublime author of the Prometheus, and his little troop the "*Partigiani*" of Salvator Rosa. All Rome was from this moment (to use a phrase which all his biographers

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the Roman population, to whom he gave the most humorous recipes. It is supposed that he borrowed the technicalities of these recipes from Giovanni Breccio, a celebrated Roman physician of that day.

have adopted) "*filled with his fame.*" That notoriety which his high genius had failed to procure for him, was obtained at once by those lighter talents, which he had nearly suffered to fall into neglect, while more elevated views had filled his mind.

Rome then abounded in private societies, or meetings*, which, dignified with the title of "*Accademie,*" occupied themselves with literature and the arts; and "*Conversazioni*" of a less pedantic character, but still smacking of the *Precieuses Ridicules* of the *Hotel Rambouillet of Paris*, were held by ladies of rank, and were more especially devoted to music, poetry, and gallantry. To such societies, whether held in the seventeenth or the nineteenth century,—in London, in Paris, or in Rome,—the talents which apply themselves to the senses rather than the intellect, and which, while they amuse

* Evelyn has preserved on record a most graphic description of these "*conversazioni*" and "*accademie.*"

all, inflict not the penalty of thinking or feeling upon any, are sure to command success. No *Lion* that was ever turned out for the amusement of the "*peu amusables*" of the supreme English circles, ever excited a stronger sensation, or was in more general request, than the Fornica of the Carnival. To use a French phrase applied to the objects of the present day's idolatry, "*on se l'arracha;*" and the account which Pascoli gives of this sudden vogue might answer for a description of the "*grand succès*" of any idol of fashionable notoriety in the saloons of the Rue Saint Honoré, or the drawing-rooms of the "west end of the town."

"Rosa," says his biographer, "who was eminently musical, and accompanied himself on the lute with wondrous skill, now went from one conversazione to another, singing and reciting, '*al improvviso,*' thus extending his fame by giving himself up to society. He saw all Rome desirous to possess him; and it was now easy for him to make his singular genius

known to all, not only as a painter, but a poet." It appears, in fact, from other testimony, that the lute and *canzonetti* of the delightful Neapolitan musician *, "*gli facessero strada nell' uscir fuori come Pittore,*" "paved the way for the fame of the painter †."

The season, however, of idleness and relaxation, the Roman summer, overtook him in the very delirium of the first enjoyment of that

* Salvator Rosa, whose satire on the style and passion for music then prevalent at Rome, made him so many enemies among the professional men of the day, found the Neapolitan canzonette still a novelty, though it had been introduced there so long back as 1611, by Della Valle. All the guitars in Rome were thrumming the canzonettes of Baptista Bellis, which were but awkward imitations of that original excellence which Salvator had acquired at the fountain-head. Through all his struggles, and in the midst of all his labours, says Baldinucci, "*Si dilettò in oltre modo della musica, e suonò il luto,*" he delighted beyond every thing in music, and played upon the lute.

† Pascoli.

homefelt and tangible fame, which came at once to his senses and apprehension; and reached him not in the faint breathings of distant report, but in the glances of bright eyes and the *bravos* of beautiful lips, which a young and handsome improvvisatore was well calculated to extort. Physically incapacitated for exercising his professional art during the enervating heats of this season*, and, perhaps, unable to call in those stray spirits and wandering thoughts, whose pleasant but profitless intoxications forbid the concentration necessary to great works, Salvator frankly gave himself up to the delicious and novel sensations of pleasing and being pleased. If the genial emotions of pleasure which circulated through his veins and warmed his imagination suffered any alloy, it was because his position in society enabled him to take a clearer view of its worthlessness than he had yet had an opportunity of obtaining.

* See his letters.

If its vices, in his more sober days, struck on his moral sense, and called forth the splenetic humour discernible in his Satires, he was now most alive to its ridicules, its pretensions, and, above all, to the bad taste so characteristic of the literary pretenders of that "unhappy century," since branded with the dishonourable appellation of "*il cattivo secolo della lingua.*"*

Too petulant to enter into any compromise with his feelings upon any subject, the admirer of Dante and Boccacio expressed his opinions of the *seicentisti* poets with more wit than discretion. The ephemeral compositions of the time, though crowned by academies, tempted him to give a practical expression to his opinion, as novel as it was dangerous and imprudent.

Salvator was a passionate admirer of the old national drama of Italy, from which Shakspeare and Moliere have alike largely drawn.

* Baretti.

Its classic original*, and fine adaptation to the taste and humour of the Italians, gave it a particular charm to one who was, in an eminent degree, a scholar and a patriot. He observed, therefore, with impatience and indignation the old "*Commedia a soggetto,*" with its rich and racy humour, hunted down by the miserable "*rimatori*" of the times, as being too national, too Italian, for the taste of the influential house of Austria; while insipid pastorals, and tame and timid imitations of the cold Greek tragedy, inundated the country,—alike setting aside the broad farce of the "*sette maschere,*" the "*Supposiți*" of Ariosto, and the "*Mandragora*" of Machiavel. The reigning drama was a compound of cold conceit and crude pedantry. The real purpose of the stage, the correction

* Derived from the Atellane farce. The actors in these plebeian, but national dramas, unlike the *histriones* or common players, kept their tribe, and served in the army. The function therefore was not deemed derogatory to a free man.

of man by man, and the representation of the possible relations of society under moral and amusing fictions, was wholly laid aside; and the abortive attempts of the fashionable writers (of whom *Tiraboschi* has given a list of several hundred) were as foreign from life and nature, as from the peculiar humour of the Italian people. Their sentiment was exaggerated, and their comedy a dull buffoonery, which preserved the coarseness, without any of the raciness, of the old Italian play. Nor is this a matter for surprise; for, though wit may sometimes be found to characterize the literature which thrives under despotic governments, humour is almost exclusively the result of free institutions.*

* Moliere's wit is much more striking than his humour. Those of his scenes which abound in the latter quality are mostly borrowed from the Italian stage; and if in his works there be any details of humour purely national, they must be considered as the remains of that rude and turbulent freedom of which the Fronde was the last explosion—a freedom which had utterly expired under the iron despotism of Louis XIV.

The old "*Commedie a soggetto,*" although they had their prescribed outlines, or "*Pistoletti,*" frequently written by men of talent, still left so much to the genius of the actor, that they may be considered as performed *impromptu.* The outline studied behind the scenes, the actor came forward, and, entering into the full conception of the part, gave vent to his originality, and filled up the canvass with such curious details, such hits at national, local, and temporary peculiarities, and such flashes of humour and of satire, as his native powers of observation, of mimicry, or of wit, enabled him to command.

The characters, however, of this drama were so definitively prescribed by ancient authority, and were so indicative of the provincial peculiarities of the Italian States, (always divided, and always prone to ridicule each other's follies and deficiencies), that they had become as conventional as the masks by which they were distinguished; and, impress-

ing a definite tone and colour on each part in the piece, they confined the caprice of the actor within well-determined boundaries.

Of these conventional characters, Pantaloon, or "*Pantalone dei Bisognosi*," represented the Venetians. Always dressed in a flowing black robe, a round cap, and an elderly long-bearded mask, he images the genuine ancient merchant of Venice: in society, a good easy man; in trade, a keen and shrewd chapman; he talks morality like a Seneca, and affects gallantry like a Preux. He is the confidant and counsellor of princes, and though a professional peace-maker, is always ready to draw the knife suspended at his side, and mingle in the fight. His ridicule, the ridicule of his nation, is a tendency to prose; and his display of slip-shod erudition derives additional effect from the lisping Venetian dialect in which it finds utterance.

The doctor, "*Il dottore Balanzoni*," is a Bolognese, an epitome of dogmatism, pedantry, and egotism; and the heaviness of his dis-

course curiously contrasts with an inarticulate rapidity in his utterance. A philosopher, an astronomer, a grammarian, a rhetorician, a cabalist, an anatomist, a physician, and a diplomatist, he knows every thing, decides on every thing, and on all subjects is the hero of his own tale. His short black open gown, enormous hat with horizontal flaps, his bloated ruby cheek and purple nose, add to the ridicule of a character, which may be taken as an exaggeration of the literary coxcombs of the university of the learned Bologna.

Tartaglia is a Neapolitan mask. With still more loquacious tendencies, his volubility is restrained by an organic defect. He is obliged to give minutes to the utterance of syllables; and the collision of his petulance and perseverance with this difficulty, produces the most ludicrous grimaces of impatience and rage. He is a professed rhodomontader; and affecting the bravo, his efforts to bolt out some fierce or violent threat, produce effects

not to be conceived by those who are ignorant of the violence of Neapolitan gesticulation. His showy habit of green and gold, and his short cloak, are the true old Neapolitan costume.

The graceful, agile, and adroit Arlechino, from whom, at an immense distance, has descended the hero of the English pantomime, is a native of Bergamo, and distinguished by the peculiarities of his province. The faithless lover of all the *soubrettes* (colombines), the buffoon of the great, the accommodating agent of the young and the gallant, the torment of old fathers and husbands, he robs misers, exhorts pedants, beats his master, and is beaten in his turn, and produces the most ludicrous *qui pro quo's* by misapplied erudition, witty absurdities, and *naïve* questions. He is the especial agent or victim of faerie, and is alternately protected and persecuted by genii and conjurers, according to the exigencies of the story. He is characterized by an half-black

mask, close-fitting jacket of many colours, white cap and slippers, and elastic wooden sword.

The doubles of Arlechino are Trufaldino and Triagnino, who differ in nothing from their "great original" but in dress, being habited in showy liveries.

Brighella is the reverse of Arlechino; trustworthy, cautious, and vigilant. He alternately wearies his master with wise saws, and proverbial similes, and amuses him by misapplied and far-fetched quotations. His dress and mask are equally conventional; and, before he speaks, his loose white jacket and pantaloons edged with blue, intimate the character to the expecting audience.

Coviello is a Calabrian; shrewd, satirical, all observing; with every talent, and every disposition to display it. His habit and general qualifications have already been noted.

The reverse in every thing to this brilliant personage, is the stupid, blundering, and bulky

Pagliaccio (the model of the clown of an English pantomime, and of the *Piero* of the French stage). His supposed ponderous figure is buried in a large, gathered, and voluminous linen dress (resembling the old Irish shirt of many ells), appropriately set off with enormous buttons. His hat is white, flexible, and capable of receiving every form. His face, independent of a mask, is rubbed with white powder, which gives him the appearance of a miller's boy; and he puffs it out by a trick of swelling his cheeks with his breath. Always advising bold measures, he is the veriest coward in nature; and affecting agility, he is always stumbling; and he drags with him in his falls his feeble old master, whom he affects to support.

Pulchinello is the true Neapolitan mask, and the idol of the people, both in Naples and throughout the Pope's dominions. This exquisite comic character may be considered as a broad caricature of the common people of

Naples, as Nature and a series of oppressive governments have left it. Quick, witty, and insolent, vain, boasting, and cowardly, Pulchinello is hurried by his volcanic and inconsiderate temperament into every species of misfortune. In his broad Neapolitan *patois*, he gives utterance to the pleasantest sallies, and the most biting satire, with a *naïveté* that seems to mingle great simplicity with great shrewdness. Whatever is most ludicrous in the extreme of Neapolitan manners, is assigned to Pulchinello. He howls like the Lazzaroni, boasts like a Spanish Don, flies to covert on the least appearance of danger, and, when all is over, is the first to join in the cry of victory. His wit, roguery, and cowardice, render him the Italian Falstaff; and his affectation of gallantry, with a person grotesquely ridiculous, recalls occasionally the adventures of the delightful knight in the Merry Wives of Windsor. His frequent allusion to maccaroni, the favourite diet of the Neapolitans, has so

confounded his identity with this national dish, that they have become inseparable in the imagination of the other Italians. It is scarcely necessary to add, after this description, that Pulchinello differs entirely from the punch of the French and English puppet-show, with whom he is confounded even by a writer in the Edinburgh Review, April 1823. He has nothing of the facetious itinerant of our streets and booths, but his hooked nose. He wears a black mask and a linen dress, fuller even than that of Pagliaccio.

The progress of time and of events has added several subordinate characters to these originals of the "*Commedia del arte*," or "*a soggetto*," who, with the lovers, fathers, guardians, &c., fill up the piece.

The great scope left to the invention of the actor, admitted the introduction of many subjects of local and temporary interest; and in filling up the canvass of the national character of Naples, Lombardy, and Venice, sarcasms

at particular institutions, or at obnoxious individuals, rendered these masked characters a sort of permitted substitute for the *liberty of the press.*

Such were the long venerated national dramas, the *Commedie a soggetto.* The comedies of the early part of the seventeenth century, on the contrary, feebly conceived and loosely constructed, generally originated in, or were acted by, private literary societies, called "*Accademie,*" distinguished by those fantastic and ludicrous names by which they are now consecrated to eternal ridicule. The members of these societies, who denied that Ariosto was a poet, (prototypes of those of the present day who refuse Pope the same title,) and who assisted in the persecution of Tasso, not only composed comedies *ad infinitum,* but acted or recited them*, until what at first had been a matter of taste or of

* "Il n'y eut si petite ville où il ne se formât une académie dont l'unique affaire étoit de donner des spectacles payés."—*Sismondi.*

literary ambition, became gradually a source of profit.

This passion for profitable theatricals became a sort of rage: it reached the palaces of princes, the refectories of monks*; and finally it infected the holy atmosphere of the Vatican itself. The first in Rome to mount the high-heeled cothurnus of sentimental or heroic comedy, had been that "*actor of all work*," the Cavalier Bernini! With the permission of his brother poetaster, Urban VIII., and the laborious assistance of his slavish pupils, he planned and constructed a theatre in the spacious hall of the "*Fonderia*" of the Vatican, which took the lead of every private theatre in Rome; and he

* "We were entertained at night with an English play at the Jesuits, where we had dined: and the next at Prince Galicano's, who himself composed the music to a magnificent opera, where were present Cardinal Pamfilio, the Pope's nephew, the governor of Rome, the Cardinal ambassadour, ladies, and a number of nobility and strangers."—*Evelyn.*

assisted to confirm that bad taste in the drama of the age, by rendering it the fashion.*

The talent which planned and finished the *baldichino* of St. Peter's, now devoted itself with equal zeal to painting scenery, inventing machinery, selecting music, and sketching the outline of a drama, which Ottaviano Castelli, one of his numerous followers, and a genuine *seicentisto*, filled up with dialogues, after the manner of Bernini's friend and model, the cavaliere Marini.†

The dramas of the Vatican had all the faults of the dramatic compositions of that age of degraded literature; and Bernini, who seems to have been the very type of Bays, introduced some practical conceits, which, in spite even of

† "Bernini," says Evelyn, "a Florentine sculptor, architect, painter, and poet, a little before my coming to the city, gave a public opera, (for so they call shows of that kind), wherein he painted the scenes, cut the statues, invented the engines, composed the music, writ the comedy, and built the theatre."

the bad taste of the times, could only have been tolerated under the sanction of *his* influence and fashion, aided by the combined talents of all his disciples, and an audience composed of princes and cardinals.

Bernini had scarcely closed his theatre for the season, and was still catching the echoes of plaudits which shook the pontifical edifice to its centre, when the opening of another private theatre was announced, at the *Vigna de' Mignanelli*, a pretty but deserted villa near the Porta del Popolo. The first day's performance attracted an audience, distinguished, if not for rank, at least for almost all the talent and discrimination which Rome then afforded. The most noted, and the least expected, of the audience was the Cavalier Bernini himself, seated conspicuously in the centre of the theatre, and surrounded by Romanelli, Guido Ubaldo, Abbatini, Ottaviano Castelli, and nearly the whole of his school and numerous followers. After some trifling delay, the usual note of pre-

paration sounded, the curtain drew up, and to the delight and surprise of the audience, the popular Formica of the Carnival came forward for the prologue, habited as the Calabrese Coviello, in the character of the *Direttore*, or manager of the theatre. He was followed by a crowd of young actors demanding the "*soggetto*" of the drama they were about to enact, with clamorous importunities. The preliminary gesticulations, the first accents of the Neapolitan dialect of Coviello, set the house in a roar; and Laughter "*holding both his sides*" indulged himself freely, after his long privations, on the benches of the Fonderia. When silence was restored, Coviello opened the prologue,* by explaining to his followers the reason of his giving into so idle an amusement as that of the acting of plays; and after an humorous description of the ardours of a Roman summer, and its enervating effects, not only on the body but on the mind, he began to dictate the

* These prologues were in prose.

plan and object of the play he was about to present; when, to the utter amazement of many, and to the great consternation of all, Coviello, in dictating rules for a genuine Italian comedy, introduced as faults to be avoided and ridicules to be laughed at, the very scenes, the dialogues, and even the new-fangled machinery of the applauded theatre of the Vatican.

Passeri, the painter, friend, and biographer of Salvator Rosa, at this most audacious attack upon one whom he has described as "*quel dragone, costode vigilante degli orti Esperidi,*" (the "dragon, the vigilant guardian of the Hesperian garden of patronage,") rose from his seat, and timidly turned his eyes upon the potent tyrant of the arts. But the dignity and prudence of Bernini did not permit him to testify the least emotion. With an affected indifference, an apparent unconsciousness of the attack he sustained, he coolly sat out the piece to the end. Not so his irritable poet and *protegé*, Ottaviano Castelli. Condemned to

silence by the example of his master, he exhibited his rage, according to Passeri, "by violent movements of the head, and by such threatening gesticulations" as intimated a deep-seated and bitter vengeance.

The prologue being finished, the comedy began; in which all the old favourites of the *Commedie al soggetto* were introduced; but it is probable that the audience was too refined, and too deeply imbued with the tastes of the *Seicentisti*, to relish its humour; for Passeri observes, that *non fu cosa considerabile*, "it was no great thing." The prologue, however, with its severe attack on Bernini and the reigning dramatic taste, was the subject of conversation throughout all Rome; and though one of the fashionable preachers of the day, a young ecclesiastic named Nicola Mussi, had taken upon himself the responsibility of the directorship of the *Teatro Mignanelli;* yet it was soon known that the originater of all, the manager, composer, scene-painter, and principal actor, was

no other than the painter of Prometheus! the elegant *improvvisatore* of the *Strada Babbuina*. While some were applauding the wit and the courage of the fearless young artist, and others were censuring his temerity and insolence, envy and self-love, wounded in the very life-nerve of sensibility, were preparing to avenge the injury they had sustained from truth and taste, by means to which the base and the *médiocre* are sure to resort. A comedy was announced for a particular day, to be performed in the theatre of the Palazzo Sforza, in the Borgo Vecchio, under the direction of the poet Ottaviano Castellani, and the patronage of his Mæcenas, the Cavalier Bernini.

The *mot d'énigme* was universally understood, and the public were prepared to witness the most signal vengeance that ever was taken on a bold and independent spirit, who dared to get the start of his age, and expose the follies and the vices by which it was degraded. The theatre was crowded at an early hour. Those

who had a few days before so willingly laughed with the Coviello of the "*Teatro Mignanelli*," now came as willingly to laugh *at* him; that he was present and conspicuously seated, was no impediment to the friendly intention.

The prologue opened with a tame parody of the prologue of Coviello. It exhibited a crowd of persons assembled to hear a "*Commedia da recitarsi*," a written comedy, or one ready to be recited; and while the reciter (who had not yet appeared) was expected, a sort of conjuror, or, as the Italians call such personages, a *chiromante*, stepped from the crowd, and offered to tell the fortunes, and relate the lives, of any of the company who would shew him their hand. The person who first offered himself to this inspection was, to all appearance, the *Formica* of the Carnival, habited and masked as the Coviello of the Mignanelli. The chiromante having perused the lineaments of his hand, began what was intended for the history of Salvator Rosa; in which the grossest calumnies,

interwoven with facts well known, left no doubt as to the personal allusion. He took for his groundwork the humble birth of Salvator in Naples, the miseries and misfortunes of his early life, his indigence and fruitless struggles in Rome, his adventures among the banditti of the Abruzzi; and upon this canvass he engrafted such follies, vices, and crimes as most degrade humanity, till, borne away by the rage of insatiable vengeance, and stimulated to greater exertion by the coldness of the disgusted and indignant audience, he burst forth into a sudden explosion of abuse against the profession, which could admit such members into its body. As the audience consisted chiefly of the most eminent artists and virtuosi in Rome, this tirade was the signal for the most unequivocal manifestation of anger, and professional indignation. The audience rose simultaneously, and left the theatre. Even Bernini and Romanelli were obliged to follow the general example, lest they should be in-

cluded in the conspiracy of Castellani, who in vain besought the spectators to return, assuring them that he meant no offence to the profession in general, and that his attacks were all directed against an individual who degraded it. None paused to receive his excuses; and he was left alone on his own stage, before his drama, which was to follow this dull and malignant prologue, had even begun.

A violent cabal was the result of these infamous calumnies, which the friends of Salvator Rosa designated as "*cose improprie, mendaci, ed imposture,*" "lies, impostures, and improprieties."

The enemies of the young artist (and they were all whose pretensions and mediocrity could not stand the test of his acumen) crowded round the standard of the slanderous Castellani; while the few distinguished by their wit, judgment, and independence, became the partisans of one, whose spirit and genius were, in spite of every obstacle, now finding their own level.

Salvator, in whom the virtue of discretion so rarely manifested itself, behaved on this occasion with equal prudence and dignity. The attack, like the character of the miserable hireling Castellani, the bravo of his party, was below notice or resentment; and Salvator avenged himself on his calumniators by taking from this moment a higher position in society, both as a private and a professional man, than he had hitherto, by the fatality of circumstances, been enabled to occupy.

CHAPTER VI.

1639—1647.

Rosa applies himself to his profession with increasing success—Cabal raised against his historical pictures—School of landscape—When first opened in Rome—Its first masters—Claude Lorraine and Gaspar Poussin—Their characters, genius, and manner—Salvator Rosa opposed to both—Becomes the favourite painter of the Roman people—His manner of living—His Lyrics—His conversazioni—Mode of recitation—His friends and associates—Their rank and talents—Musical composers—Salvator's attack upon the Modern School of Music, and upon the morals of its professors—Extract from his Satire on Music—He increases the number of his enemies—His first great Battle-piece—His Sorceress for the *Casa Rossi*—His poem of the *Incantation* composed at the same time—Character of his poetic genius—His *Prodigal Son*, and other works—Altar-pieces for Milan—His *Purgatory*—His professional dignity—Refuses all dictation—Anecdote of the Roman Prince!—Friendship of the Prince Don Mario Ghigi—Anecdote

—Salvator takes up the cause of an amateur rejected by the Academy of St. Luke—Calumnies of his enemies—Historical pictures — *Pindar and Pan*, painted for the Ghigi Palace.

WITH the Carnival and summer of 1639 terminated the idle but not inelegant dissipations of Salvator Rosa. Although the light-hearted frolics of this gay and brilliant period of his life were enjoyed in the saloons of the great, in the academies of the learned, and in the private theatres of the virtuosi of the day, (and these were chiefly artists and ecclesiastics*,) yet was this the epoch which furnished a ground-work for calumnies, which the spirit of party even still circulates in Italy, to the prejudice of one whose crime lay not in the

* One of the great objections of Milton to academical education was, that men intended for the Church were permitted in such institutions *to act plays*. "Writhing and unboning their *clergy* limbs to all the antic and dishonest gestures of trincalos, buffoons, &c. in the eyes of courtiers and court ladies, their grooms and mademoiselles."

freedom of his morals, or the licence of his conduct, but in the boldness of his opinions and the independence of his principles. Passeri, however, supposes that Salvator hesitated for a moment whether he would not pursue that path to notoriety which he had so successfully opened, by cultivating the drama and becoming a professed play-writer; but he soon gave up the idea, though a favourite one, because such compositions, *come cose disgregate, non partorirano troppo buono nome*, "being unconnected with his profession, were injurious to his reputation:"—a proof of the gravity and respectability of a profession which Raphael and Michael Angelo had rendered almost sacred in public opinion.* He withdrew therefore, with

* "Ses comedies furent fort à la mode, et chacun à son exemple voulut être acteur."—*Abrégé de la Vie des plus fameux Peintres*, Tom. i.

Of these comedies I cannot find a trace, though all Salvator's biographers allude to them. In a letter which now lies before me, from the learned and excellent Abbate

infinite prudence, from pursuits thus fascinating, and confined, as it is expressly said, "his modest recreations (*"sue modeste recreazioni"*) to the intimate society of his particular friends." Painting, the business of his life and the object of his ambition, was resumed with new ardour, and followed with an increasing success.

His vogue had now brought forward his genius; and the verses of the amusing *improvvisatore* did more for the author of the Prometheus than the Prometheus itself. Known as a dramatist, an actor, a poet, a painter, and a musician, all obstacles to fame were removed.

Cancelliari of Rome, it is said that Salvator Rosa accompanied his musical farces, composed by himself, upon various instruments. These were probably a species of *buffo-cantata;* but it is likely that his dramas were mere sketches or "*canevas,*" after the manner of the *commedia del arte,* which the actors filled up. His own parts he acted *al improvviso.* This style of composition is still followed in the minor theatres of Naples.—See *Goldoni's Memoirs.*

The species of fashion he now enjoyed, however lightly founded, became of the most solid benefit; and commissions for his admirable landscapes poured in with a rapidity which required all his well-known facility to execute.*

Yet, with a success as brilliant as it was rapid, Salvator was again sinking into despondency. Insensible of the good he possessed, he smarted under the privation of that species of fame which he most emulated. It was in vain that his exquisite landscapes enriched the select gallery of the Palazzo Feodele†, and

* "Datosi allora tutto a dipingere, ebbe molte commissioni per molti quadri, e come velocissimo era nell' operazione, facile assai gli reusciva il saziare ognuno che ne bramava: guadagnò in poco tempo grosse somme di danaro.—*Pascoli.*

Salvator was wont to finish before night a cabinet picture begun in the morning.

† The Feodele gallery was in high estimation in the seventeenth century. But many of the great galleries

took their places among the chefs-d'œuvre of his own admired Titian in the princely gallery of the Spada.* The vogue which his landscapes and small figures obtained, rather wounded than satisfied the ambition of their author. His powerful genius demanded vastness of space, extension of form, and all the high concomitants of philosophical conceptions, historical incidents, and moral and poetical combinations. The elements of his Titans, his Regulus, his Catiline, were floating vaguely and as yet vainly in his imagination. He panted to

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of that age have merged into other collections, or have found their way to foreign countries. The *mal-administration* of their domestic affairs had reduced many of the Roman nobility to dispose of their finest pictures long before the French Revolution.

* These landscapes still hang in the Spada gallery. I am told that a celebrated Italian artist has said they are the only original pictures of Salvator now in Rome!—a strange assertion, which many in Rome will doubtless contest. Both the credulity and the scepticism of the Italian virtuosi are, to say the least of them, rather curious.

obtain some of the great public works which would have admitted a display of these high and conscious powers; but they were in the exclusive gift of the government and its partisans; and his attack on Bernini had deprived him for ever of advantages, which were daily lavished on Romanelli, and on others, whose mediocrity was their best recommendation to the jealous arbiter of the fine arts.

While Salvator thus repined at a destiny which threw his genius into thraldom, and (as he deemed it) brought more profit than glory, his sudden and extraordinary success excited the rancorous envy of a profession, accused beyond every other of indulging in that irritable self-love which views an enemy in every competitor, and is more jealous of the success than of the merit of a rival. The success of Salvator was of that kind which is never pardoned—a success obtained in brilliant society. The man and the artist had each their share in the malice thus excited. It was industriously

circulated that the author of PROMETHEUS could not paint an historical picture; that he was incapable of executing any thing beyond those small landscapes and marine pieces which owed their vogue to their originality.

But in granting him this one master-quality, they ceded him that which placed him above all who attacked and all who opposed him, and rendered him worthy to enter the lists with those two great masters of landscape, whose splendid reputations were at their *acme* when Salvator came forth "to share the triumph and partake the gale" of their popularity.

These illustrious men were Claude Lorraine and Gaspar Poussin.* The *figuristi*, as the

* Pietro Berrettini, or Pietro da Cortona, a contemporary of these great masters, though an historical painter, also executed landscapes of some merit, chiefly for the Sacchetti family, from whose once splendid gallery they have been transferred to the Capitol. An Italian critic has observed of Berrettini, "Era Pietro un pittore che faceva bene ciò che voleva, e così ancora i Paesi. Non

historical painters were then affectedly called in contradistinction to that new genus in the art, the "*paesanti*," had been rapidly declining in number and in merit; when Adam Elzheimer*, called *il Tedesco*, first opened a school of landscape in Rome under the pontificate of Paul V. The rapid progress made in this new and refreshing branch of art by Viola†, by Vincenzo Armanno, and other dis-

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che voglio paragonarlo in questo genere con Poussino, Claudio, e Salvator Rosa."—*Risposta alle riflessioni critiche del Signor Marchese D'Argens*, p. 64.

* Adam Elzheimer, the son of a poor tailor, was born in 1574, and died in 1620, when Salvator Rosa was just five years old. Although he was the founder of a school of landscape, this beautiful branch of painting was occasionally and incidentally cultivated by the Caracci and their pupils, and it employed some of the first geniuses of the Roman and Lombard schools. Among the pupils of Adam Elzheimer was David Teniers.

† Born in 1600, and died in his eightieth year. It became the fashion at Rome at this period to reform the

ciples of the Oltramontanes, opened the route to that ultimate perfection which was obtained under Urban VIII., and which bestowed upon the reign of the Barberini pope the title of "*Il secolo d' oro dei Paesanti*,"—the golden age of landscape-painters.

At the moment when Salvator came to illustrate this *golden age* with new splendour, Claude Gelée, called Lorraine, reigned supreme over the school of landscape-painting in Rome, and, it may be added, in Europe. It is related in the Life of this extraordinary person, that it was the constant complaint of his father, Pierre Gelée, an humble pastrycook in a little town in Lorraine, that his son Claude was so imbecile that he never could teach him to make a pie or heat an oven. Pierre's brother (a stonemason by trade) advised him to make the lad a priest, because the proverb says, "If your child is

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vignas and villas on the model of the fanciful buildings introduced by Viola into his landscapes. Of this fact the *Villa-Pia* near Rome is said to be an example.

good for nothing else, he will be good for the Church." But there was as little chance of making Claude a priest as a baker; for if he could not be taught to make a pie, neither could he be brought to learn to read. Much parental persecution ensued. The *Imbecile* could feel, if he could not learn; and he escaped from the tyranny of the parental government, and hired himself as a servant of all-work with some Flemish artists who were going to study in Rome. It was at one of the initiatory festivals of his Oltramontane masters, that the culinary duties of Claude Gelée developed some latent talents for the gastronomic art, which his father had never been able to elicit: and Agostino Tassi, a Roman painter, whose tastes were of the palate as well as of the palette, seduced this pains-taking scrub from his masters, and hired him, at an increase of wages, in the double capacity of cook and colour-grinder.*

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* Agostino Tassi, "*malvagio uomo, ma pittore eccellente*," a bad man, but a good painter, was one of the most

It was in the *studio* of his new master that Claude first felt those aspirations to a new and higher calling, which, had they been devoted to another cause, were sufficiently miraculous to have been deemed the mysterious operation of grace working upon imbecility, independently of its own volition, and beyond the sphere of its own energies.

From the stupor of unidea'd dulness, from

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extraordinary geniuses of his age. Having, for some of his many extravagances, been condemned to the gallies, he amused himself by sketching the scenes and groupings which his new situation presented to him, and which he afterwards reproduced with admirable effect in the frescoes with which he covered several of the palaces of Rome and Genoa. His house was filled with young artists, who assisted him, and whom he paid by his instructions, and by keeping a good table for them. Claude was hired simply "*per le domestiche facende et per macignargli i colori*"—for domestic services and to grind colours. Tassi endeavoured to give him some instructions in painting, and failed in the first instance; but he lived to see this *scrub* become the first painter of the age.

the lowliness of homely avocation, from an obscurity the most apparently impervious to any ray of prosperity, suddenly started forth one of the most successful candidates for immortality, which the art of painting ever produced. He who had not sufficient comprehension to make a tart or to spell a homily, was now involved in the study of pure abstractions, calculating refractions of light, and measuring aerial perspectives by luminous or ideal lines.

"*Le voilà,*" says one of the briefest, but most delightful of his biographers (the Baron Denon), "*le voilà qui établit dans le vague les graves et solides verités de la géometrie; en un mot, le voilà dévenu le plus grand paysagiste de l'univers.*"

In his thirty-sixth year, Claude Gelée was cooking cutlets and grinding colours; in ten years afterwards, Claude Lorraine appears on the scene, the friend of the elegant Cardinal Bentivoglio, the distinguished favourite of

Urban VIII., the courted of him who was courted by all, Bernini, and the *patent* painter of fashion to all the aristocracy of Europe. "The road to his gallery (says one of his historians) was closed against all who held not the highest rank in the state." Pontiffs, potentates, and princes, became the exclusive candidates for the splendid products of his creative genius. His enormous prices limited his purchasers to the enormously wealthy; and the public were in a manner shut out from bidding for pictures, of which *three* popes successively, and two sovereigns, sought to be the exclusive monopolists.

Whatever could be spared of the fashionable predilection which existed in favour of Claude, was given to his eminent condisciple and pupil, Gaspar Dughet; who had, by the favour of his first master, kinsman, and protector, Nicholas Poussin, taken the name of Poussin.* Taught

* Gaspar Poussin, born in 1613, died in 1675. He and

in the schools, and protected by the influence of such men, and above all strongly recommended by Bernini,* Gaspar Poussin began his career under circumstances so intoxicating, that his success is the more to be admired; for adversity is the true school of genius; which, like religion, requires persecution to prove its divine origin.

The effect of the ever-effective *chiaro oscuro* had been reiterated to repletion, by Adam Elzheimer and his school. It was the genius of Claude which developed the new mystery of perspective, until his glorious pictures seemed to open vistas through the walls they decorated. The creator of a vegetable aris-

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Vandervert were both pupils of Claude. Gaspar, however, came into his *studio* the highly finished pupil of N. Poussin, with whom it is supposed that Claude also studied.

* Gaspar Poussin painted the frescoes of Bernini's palace for nothing, and ever afterwards the Cavalier was his "*procur titré.*"

tocracy, this master painter of the elements ennobled the nature he copied, and was the first to stamp a *beau idéal* upon her material aspect, as Raphael had before done upon the human countenance.

Those suns that seemed to set in a radiance which rivalled their meridian; those waters that never rippled but to summer breezes; that halo of light and lustre which fell over Eden scenes of almost unearthly loveliness; the splendour of architecture; the fair round forms of ruminating cattle, reposing in deep shades, or cooling their fervid sides in lucid streams, afforded combinations, which, in their endless variety, seemed to exhaust the powers of scenic nature, and to bid defiance to rivalry or imitation.

Gaspar Poussin, more learned than Claude, and more deeply tinged with the profound erudition of their common master Nicholas, produced pictures, in which every image was susceptible of a commentary. Deficient in the

brilliant idealism and splendid colouring of Lorraine, his works are characterized by a pastoral elegance and sylvan propriety, which produced for him the title of the "*gentile artifice.*"*

He scattered over his landscapes the most beautiful features of the Tuscan and Tiburtine territories; and the broad foliage of his elegant plantains, his limpid fountains, and silver streamlets, his gentle undulations, and fair pavilions, his perpetual verdure and cool skies, tempered down to the delicacy of his Arcadian figures,† exhibited a nature chosen and se-

* Poussin had, in common with Salvator, the gift of celerity, and he too began and finished his landscapes in a day. His great pictures are in the Palazzo Pamfili Doria at Rome, and they give the name of "Gran Sala di Poussino" to one of its apartments. The finest is said to be that of the *bridge of Lucacio* on the Via di Tivoli. In an adjoining chamber are some landscapes by Salvator Rosa.

† They look like poets in disguise, realizing their own

lected with practised judgment, such as she is seen in the descriptions of Tasso, of the fairy gardens of the voluptuous Armida. In the works of both these illustrious masters, in the radiant sun-lights of Claude, and the serene heavens of Poussin, the terrestrial world lies wrapped in a sweet repose.

Nature, in her tranquil beauty, always appears the benefactress of man, not his destroyer;

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pastoral dreams in scenes of their own ideal conception. "*Le figure non sono d'ordinario, bifolchi, pastori ed armenti, come ne' quadri fiaminghi; ma personaggi presi dalla favola o' dall' antica storia.*"—Ticozzi.

These figures, however, were generally painted by Nicholas Poussin, as Claude's were by Borguignone and Filippo Lauri. Claude was wont to say, I sell my landscapes, and make a present of my figures, "*Vendo i paesi, e regalo le figure.*" His oxen, goats, and aquatic birds, are however deemed admirable; but moral nature seemed shut out from his view. He saw her in her tangible forms, and not, like Salvator Rosa, in her spirit.

the source of his joys, not the tomb of his hopes and the scourge of his brief existence; and such she appeared in the works of the two powerful geniuses who presided over landscape-painting, when Salvator Rosa came forth upon that arena, which they had hitherto exclusively occupied, and dispelled the splendid but "unreal mockery" of elements always genial, and nature always undisturbed. *His* magic pencil threw all into life and motion and fearful activity. The "*famoso pittore delle cose morali*" could not separate the scene from the actor. He could not separate subordinate matter from him, who was mocked in being told he was made to rule over it: and representing nature as he saw her in those mighty regions he had most studied, *he* painted her the inevitable agent of human suffering, mingling all her great operations with the passions and interests of man, blasting him with her thunderbolt! wrecking him in her storms! burying him

in her avalanches! and whelming him in her tornadoes!*

The least of his landscapes were pregnant with moral interest, and calculated to awaken human sympathies. His deep and gloomy forests, whose impervious shade is relieved by the silver bark of the shattered oak that forms the foreground, is only given as the shelter of the formidable bandit, whose bold and careless figure, strangely armed and wildly habited, fixes the eye beyond all the merits of the scenic representation. The long line of stony pathway cut through masses of impending rock, is but the defile in which the gallant cavalier, bent on some generous enterprise, is overtaken by the pitiless outlaw—or, by the rush of storms, which seem to threaten destruction at

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* "Admirable paysagiste, son style austère, ses formes terribles excitent le frissonnement que fait éprouver la nature à la vue des montagnes escarpées et des rocs sourcilleux."—*Monge.*

every step his frighted steed advances. The way-worn traveller, the benighted pilgrim, the shipwrecked mariner, introduced as accessories into the main scene, become images that engage the heart as well as the eye, and give to the inanimate character of landscape a moral action and an historical interest.

Such drear and fearful aspects of nature, mingled with such views of society, concealed an "*arrière pensée*," which, if it did not strike at once upon the apprehension of the spectator, worked its way through his imagination. The *many*, in gazing on the works of Salvator, felt, they knew not why—the *few* (and those few the great) became enamoured of pictures, which gave them a sensation, even though that sensation was one of terror: and the public, always idolatrous of originality and prone to excitement, were not to be satiated by representations powerfully calculated to awaken all their sympathies.

The people of Rome are described as moving

in dusky groups through the hallowed round of the Pantheon, on the festival of "*San Giovanni decollato*," muttering their untaught criticisms, and after having enquired, "Have you seen the *Titian*, the *Coreggio*, the *Veronese*, or the *Parmegiano*," never failed to add "*and our Signor* Salvator?" for *our* Signor Salvator need fear no competition with the Titians and Guidos, the Guercinos, nor with any other master.

The reverence of the people, which had bestowed upon Rosa the title of the *Signor*, and their exclamations when his pictures were exposed in the Rotunda, "stomached many honourable men," says Passeri; "and the ostentatious plaudits of his admirers served but to increase the mass of envy he had already excited; though he, poor gentleman, was innocent of it."* The title of "*Il Signor*," con-

* Speaking of the three celebrated landscape-painters of the seventeenth century, Lanzi observes, that the influence of fashion alternately exalted Claude, G. Poussin,

ferred upon Rosa by the people of Rome, was the only one he ever received. But the aristocracy of nature had been admitted by her unsophisticated children; and the letters patent of nobility which she had conferred, were acknowledged as legitimate claims to reverence and esteem.

Neither coping with Claude Lorraine, nor with Gaspar Poussin; nor associating with men whose plain and rustic characters*, in despite of their professional talents, stood curiously and

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and Salvator Rosa; but that in the beginning of the eighteenth, Rosa united all suffrages, and was "*il più acclamato.*"

* Claude Lorraine, out of his art, remained the same inept and simple person, even in the height of his reputation, as when he was cooking and grinding colours for Tassi. His mind was like a dark space into which some accidental aperture admits one bright gleam of light.

His friend G. Poussin, who imitated without possessing the learning of his master Nicholas, was a simple and ignorant man, who had no existence out of his workroom, except in the chase: and he devoted himself to this pur-

coarsely opposed to his own, Salvator, with respect to his fraternity, stood alone

"Among them, but not of them,
In a shroud of thoughts which were not *their* thoughts,"

as singular in his habits of life, as in the bold originality of his works.

A stoic upon principle, but a voluptuary by temperament, Salvator endeavoured to assimilate opinions and tastes so little in accordance. Scarcely escaped from penury and absolute want, he already began to find

"*Le superflu, chose très nécessaire.*"

His dress became as remarkable for its studied elegance, as it was affectedly free from the showy splendour of that ostentatious age.* "It was a fine sight (says his friend Baldinucci) to

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suit with such incautious ardour, that it brought on a complication of disorders, of which he died in the meridian of his reputation.

* "Vestiva gallante, ma non alla cortegiana; senza gale, e superfluità."

see him pass along the streets of Rome, with a certain dignified deportment, followed by a servant with a silver-hafted sword, while all who met him gave way to him." The many pictures he painted of himself, and the descriptions left of his person by his contemporary biographers, are proofs, that the personal vanity which his enemies have numbered among his vices, was not without some foundation; and it appears that if he had been good for nothing else, he would have been at least "*bon à peindre.*"

A person so distinguished, a character so ardent, with passions which time failed to subdue, and an imagination which lent its magic even to the merest objects of sense, naturally involved him at this period of his life, and in a society where love was the business of all ages and ranks, in ties, to which he brought more truth, devotion, and sincerity, than he found.*

* One of the most beautiful of his cantatas, rescued by

A cantata which he wrote at this period, and which was set to music by his friend Cesti, gives the impression of his being the most miserable and discontented of mankind. "All his lyrics, (says the elegant writer, who first made them known to the English public,) —"All his lyrics were complaints against his mistress or mankind. But in his fifth cantata, he deems his afflictions, like the stars of the firmament, countless; and makes the melan-

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Dr. Burney from oblivion, is a proof of this assertion. It is a vow of fidelity to his mistress, under all circumstances of time and change; and if the terminating stanza be deemed a *concetto*, it is certainly the prettiest that Italian poesy has been guilty of.

"E se la natura avara
Del suo mortal tesoro
Di questo crin mai le rubasse l'oro,
Povero, ma contento
Lo vedrò bianco
E l'amero d'argento."

Cantata VII., set to music by Luigi Rossi.

choly confession, that out of six lustres which he had passed, he had not known the enjoyment of one happy day." This querulous melancholy, inseparable from the temperament of the highest order of genius, which is so prone to feel and to suffer, gives a charm to the character of Salvator, which his occasional flashes of gaiety and humour, his splenetic pleasantry and comic representations of the follies and vices of society, rather relieve and heighten, than decrease. While his pathetic *cantatas*, and their plaintive compositions, drew tears from the brightest eyes in Rome, the "potent, grave, and reverend signors" of the conclave, did not disdain to solicit admission to those evening *conversazioni* of the *Via Babbuina*, where the comic Muse alone presided; but where, under the guise of national *naïveté*, veiled in a rustic dialect, and set off by the most humorous gesticulations, truths were let drop with impunity, more perilous than those, for translating which from the pages of Lucian

a *protegé* of the Grand Duke de' Medici was at the same moment confined by the Inquisition.

It was in these *conversazioni* that Salvator tried the point of the sarcasms against the church, the government, and the existing state of literature and the arts, which were afterwards given to the world in his published satires, and which still draw down on his memory the unfounded calumnies that embittered his life.

The *manner* of the daring *improvvisatore*, as left on record by his chroniclers, or handed down by tradition, was no less singular and attractive, than the matter which inspired him. The apartment in which he received his company, was affectedly simple. The walls, hung with faded tapestry, exhibited none of his beautiful pictures, which might well have attracted attention from the actor to his works. A few rows of forms included all the furniture; and they were secured at an early hour by the impatience of an audience, select and

exclusive; either invited by himself or introduced by his friends. When the company were assembled, and not before, Salvator appeared in the circle, but with the air of an host rather than that of an exhibitor, until the desire to hear him recite his poetry, or to *improvvisare*, expressed by some individual, produced a general acclamation of entreaty. It was a part of his coquetry to require much solicitation: and when at last he consented, he rose with an air of timidity and confusion, and presented himself with his lute, or a roll of paper containing the heads of his subject. After some graceful hesitation, a few preluding chords, or a slight hem! to clear his full, deep voice, the scene changed: the elegant, the sublime Salvator disappeared, and was replaced by the gesticulating and grimacing Coviello, who, long before he spoke, excited such bursts of merriment, "*con le più ridicolose smorfie al suo modo Napolitano,*" (with the most laughable grimaces in the true Neapolitan stile) that even the gravest of his audience were

ready to burst. When the adroit *improvvisatore* had thus wound up his auditory to a certain pitch of exaltation, and prepared them at least to receive with good humour whatever he might hazard, he suddenly stepped forth and exclaimed with great energy, in the broad Neapolitan of the Largo di Castello; "*Siente chisso vè, auza gli uocci.*"* He then began his recitation: "Whatever were its faults of composition," says one of his biographers, "it was impossible to detect them, as long as he recited. Nor could their charm be understood by those who did not hear them recited by himself. When some of these productions were published after his death, it was supposed that they would lose much of their apparent merit, because his fervid and abundant genius, rich in its natural fertility, despised the trammels of art, as submitting talent to mean and

* A Neapolitan idiom, meaning "Awaken and heed me," but literally translated, "Listen and open your eyes!"

slavish rules. The contrary, however, was the fact; for they excited universal admiration." *

With a thirst for praise, which scarcely any applause could satisfy, Salvator united a quickness of perception that rendered him suspicious of pleasing, even at the moment he was most successful. A gaping mouth, a closing lid, a languid look, or an impatient hem! threw him into utter confusion, and deprived him of all presence of mind, of all power of concealing his mortification. When he perceived that some witty sally had fallen lifeless, that some epigrammatic point had escaped the notice of his auditors, he was wont to exclaim

* This and many other passages in the various and contradictory lives of Salvator, prove that his recitations contained the elements of his satires. Of these recitations it is said that there were taken down, "Infinite copie à penna che subito sparsero per tutta l'Italia" (many copies in MS. which were quickly spread through all Italy.) Five editions of the Satires themselves were published in Italy before 1770.

to his particular friends, when the strangers were departed, "What folly to lose my time and talent in reading before these beasts of burden, who feel nothing, and have no intellect beyond what is necessary to understand the street ballads of the *blind band*."* Such is the power which an insatiable love of glory may hold, even over the most elevated intellect!

While the ambition of Salvator demanded a public and an audience to do the honours by his singular authorship, his warm heart and refined tastes had other wants, more difficult to satisfy. In the crowd which flocked to his

* In his own Neapolitan, (to which he always had recourse when under strong emotion), "Aggio io bene speso lo tiempo mio, in leggere le fatiche mie alli somari, e a gente che nulla intienne, avvezza solamente a sientire non autro che la canzona dello cieco." These "ciechi" still haunt the streets of Italy, to the delight of strangers. They are bands of itinerant musicians composed of the blind. That at Bologna is, at present, particularly excellent.

conversazioni to be amused, there were some who preferred the original and interesting discourse of the man, to the recitations of the enterprising *improvvisatore;* and it was the singular felicity of Salvator Rosa to have surrounded himself at this period, and to have retained through life, a little band of intimates, whose tastes and views and talents, coinciding with his own, formed that true and only basis of friendship, sympathy and equality.

At the head of this band stood *Carlo Rossi*, a Roman citizen, worthy of Rome's best days, an Italian banker of the old Medicean stamp, a scholar of no ordinary learning, a judge if not a writer of poetry, and a distinguished patron of the arts. Abounding in wealth and taste, he relieved the toil of the counting-house, in which, like old *Cosmo de' Medici*, he himself daily presided, by recreations and pursuits the most refined and elevated; and he had cultivated music with such success, that, after his brother, the celebrated musician and com-

poser Luigi Rossi, he was esteemed the first harp-player in Italy, in an age too, when that beautiful and graceful instrument was more in fashion than it has been ever since. Carlo Rossi had become acquainted with Salvator through his professional merits; having been induced to seek him out by his exquisite landscapes exhibited in the Pantheon. But he soon discovered in the man whom he had at first sought as an artist to enrich his noble gallery, all the principles, acquirements, and pursuits, which he desired in the friend of his intimate hours. The banker, and the painter, the man of business and the man of genius, became inseparable. The friendship of Carlo Rossi frequently rushed between Salvator and the ruin prepared for him by his enemies. The counsels of Carlo Rossi were alone capable of soothing the perturbations of that haughty and fiery spirit, which perpetually plunged its victim into new and perilous difficulties. It was for Carlo Rossi that Salvator worked best

and oftenest; he was the comforter, whose intimacy so often rendered his life endurable, and the mourner whose tenderness conferred the last honours at his death. The little chapel to the left of the "*chiesa di Santa Maria di Monte Santo*" at Rome, is a monument of the respect and tenderness with which the first citizen of Italy, in the seventeenth century, honoured the memory of the first of her artists.*

* The Rossis were by descent Neapolitans, but were naturalized citizens of Rome. About the time here alluded to (1640), Luigi Rossi was in the enjoyment of great celebrity, for his canzonetti and his opera of "*Giuseppe figlio di Giacobbe*," which was still extant towards the conclusion of the last century. Some of his *motets*, to be found in the Christ-church collection, are esteemed equal to those of Capella. The words of the canzonette beginning,

"Or che la notte del silenzio amica,"

and of another called *La Fortuna*, are supposed to have been written by Salvator Rosa.

Carlo Rossi was a merchant, as well as a banker, and one of the wealthiest and most respected in Italy.

Of this band also, were the Count Ugo Maffei of Volterra, (whose historical name recalls that highly gifted family, which for two centuries illustrated by its taste and erudition the literature of Italy,*) and the learned Baptista Ricciardi of the university of Pisa, whose epistolary correspondence with Salvator Rosa has called forth such generous and noble sentiments, as are alone sufficient to rescue the maligned character of his illustrious friend from the calumnies with which party spirit has blackened it.

Among the intimates of Salvator were also the quaint, but excellent Passeri, more re-

* Ugo Maffei was afterwards chargé d'affaires de France at Rome, where he educated his celebrated nephew Paul Alexander Maffei, one of the most learned men of the age, and author of some ingenious works on virtù. The "Merope" of Scipio Maffei excited the jealousy of Voltaire, and was the only tragedy of distinguished celebrity for ninety years previous to the productions of Alfieri.

nowned for his piety, than his pictures, though a disciple of Domenichino,—Francesco Redi, one of the most celebrated *literati* of his age,—Fra Reginaldo Sgambatisti of the order of Predicatori, an elegant preacher and a good Latin poet, always named as "*l'amico intrinsico*," the *intimate friend* of Salvator,—the acute and clever Padre Oliva, general of the Jesuits,—Baldinucci the painter, and the biographer of painters,—and the elegant and all-accomplished Duke di Salviati, who conferred upon Rosa the title so well merited of

"*Famoso pittore delle cose morale.*"*

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* The Salviati family was one of the most distinguished in Tuscany. Besides its celebrated Cardinal, who, as Grand Prior of Rome and Admiral of the Maltese order, rendered himself so formidable to the Ottoman Empire, it produced many other distinguished persons. Amongst these, the young Duke Salviati was so enamoured of a picture painted by Salvator for Signor Francesco Cordini

Such are the men who formed the intimate society of one who is accused of having frequented the company, and participated in the orgies of the low and the profligate; and of whom it is said to this day in Rome, that he lived exclusively with the *populaccio of the Trastevere.*

The musical talents of the composer of several of the best cantatas then in vogue, drew also around him the greatest masters of an age in which music was rapidly assuming an ascendancy over all the other arts. Cesti*,

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of Florence, (Philosophy presenting a mirror to Nature) that he made it the subject of an ode, which begins

"Quel gelida pianeta
Che di luce non sua vago resplende," &c.

* The Padre Marc-Antonio Cesti of Volterra was a Minor Conventual, a pious ecclesiastic, and one of the most fashionable musical composers of the day. He gave his first opera, the "Orontea," to the Italian stage in 1649, and it remained a stock-piece for upwards of thirty years. In 1660 the Padre was still a first tenor

Legrenze, Cavalli, Ferrari, Luigi Rossi, and Giacomo Carissimi, were not only the *habitûes* of Rosa's house, but were all emulous of setting his verses to music, and this too at the very moment when that satirist was lashing the profession, sometimes with the nervous conciseness of Juvenal, and sometimes with the Attic severity of Lucian. Observing the manners of an age in which he deemed it an indignity to have been born, with the deep and philosophic view which distinguished all he thought and

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singer in the Pope's chapel. The only *scena* of his Orontea extant was found in a MS. music-book of S. Rosa in 1777 by Dr. Burney. Passeri says of him, "Così celebre per la sua abilità nel canto e nei componimenti, &c."

Cavalli and Ferrari were at this time composing operas for Venice and Bologna, and for the private theatricals of Rome: no public theatre being permitted there before the year 1671, when one was opened in the *Torre della Nona*. To these musicians of the seventeenth century may be added Monti Verde, Sacrati, and Tignali.

produced, Salvator perceived that the Church was making the same monopoly of music as she had done of painting, and would in the end degrade one art (as she had already deteriorated the other) to the worst purposes. The finest singers were now shut up in the Roman monasteries; and all Rome was then resorting to the *Spirito Santo,* to hear the sister Veronica, a beautiful nun, who awakened emotions in her auditors that did not *all* belong to heaven.*

It was in the palaces of the *Porporati* that the first musical dramas were given, which bore any resemblance to the modern opera†, by

* Evelyn mentions this nun, whom it was the fashion to hear when he was in Rome.

† The first attempt at a regular drama was made at Rome in one of these palaces as early as 1632, three years before Salvator's first arrival there. It was called "Il Ritorno di Angelica nella India," and was composed by the then fashionable secular composer Tignali. Public operas were at this time performing in Venice and Bologna.

which they are now succeeded in the "Argentina;" and the choir of the pontifical chapel

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It may be curious to observe, that the instruments which were then found in the secular orchestras of Italy, were the organ, viol, viol de gamba, harp, lute, guitar, spinette, harpsichord, theorbo, and trumpets: while the court band of Louis XIII. and XIV. only consisted of the far-famed

"Four-and-twenty fiddlers all in a row;"

and even they were imported from Italy. The first and the most distinguished was Baptiste Lulli, brought from Florence by Maria de' Medici, at the age of fourteen. From a simple *violonier*, he became the founder of the French opera, and the model upon which Camfra, Destouches, and other French composers founded their braying monotonies. At the same period in England, the music of Lawes and Bird was laid aside as profane, and replaced by those pious discords,

Such as from lab'ring lungs enthusiast blows,
High sounds attempted through the vocal nose.

Vicenzio Galileo (the father of the celebrated astronomer) remarks, however, in his Dialogo della Musica, that the best Italian lyres were made for the English market.

(which gave the musical tone to all the churches of Christendom, while it engrossed all the patronage of the government) was gradually abandoning those learned combinations, and that solemn and affecting simplicity, which were calculated to answer the purposes of a passionate devotion, and to satisfy at the same moment the taste of the amateur and the enthusiasm of the devotee.

While the music of the Church was gradually assuming an effeminate character, the palaces of the great were filled with the most worthless of the profession, of both sexes.* The genius which went to the composition of the finest music, was then, as now, less prized and rewarded than the voice which executed it†;

* " Il principe in circar questa *canaglia*
Scandolo della corte, e de' palazzi!"
S. Rosa, Satira 1ma.

† " Chiama in Roma più gente alla sua udienza
L' Arpa d'una Licisca, cantatrice,
Che la campana della sapienza."—*Ibid.*

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and the profligacy of the public singers in Italy was no impediment to their reception into the first families of the country. Upon this shameless laxity of manners, and the visible degradation of ecclesiastical music, Salvator fell with a puritan's severity, scarcely surpassed by the anathemas of Calvin, or the vituperations of Erasmus. He attacked the style of singing in the pontifical chapel.* He attacked the vices of a profession which now, beyond every other, received the special patronage of the

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What a vast difference in the present day is there between the remuneration of a *Catalani* and a *Rossini!*

* See the first Satire from "Che scandolo è il sentir" to "e gighe e sarabande alla distesa," of which the following is a very *un*-poetical translation:—

Oh shameless! thus to hear an hireling band,
In holy temples raise a voice profane—
Mount sacred rostrums with sol fa in hand,
And hymn their God in bacchanalian strain—
A mass or vespers bray, bark hallelujahs,
And roar their pater-nosters and their glorias.

lords of the Conclave; and though his efforts at reformation were as yet confined to his recitations, and to the frank utterance of opinions over which he held no control, yet these philippics increased the number of his enemies,

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Where sinful eyes should drop their penance tear,
Where sinful hearts should woo returning grace,
The dilettante penitent, all ear,
Seeks faults in tenors, beauties in a bass;
While thrill's or fall's discordant shriek or howl
Lulls or distracts the vacillating soul.

Each sacred sanctuary now is seen,
Like some rude temple of the god of wine,
A Noah's ark, where many a beast unclean
Profanes the altar and defiles the shrine;
While in loose strain the Miserere's given,
And wafts the soul upon a jig to Heaven.

In the original the last lines stand—

"Cantar su la ciaccona il Miserere
Et con stilo da farza e da commedia
E gighe e sarabande alla distesa."

even more than an attack on religion itself would have done.*

While, however, all the singers in Rome, with their patrons and partisans, took the field against the satirist, the great composers, distinguished alike for their genius and their morals, rallied round him; and the musical album of Salvator, brought a century after his death into England, (the land which has always been *true* to his merits, and in sympathy with his genius,) is a record that he offended none but those, whose enmity was distinction.†

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* Salvator, however, was not the only *censor* of *musical* morals. In the *Discorsi di Musica di Vincenzio Chiavelloni*, published in Rome in 1668, a severe attack was made on the morals of musicians, after the manner of Salvator. These diatribes were *recited* by the author in a musical academy, as Salvator recited his "*Musica*;" and to say the truth," says Zeno, "their morals wanted as much correction as their music."

† "Among the musical MSS. purchased at Rome in 1770, one that ranks the highest in my own favour was

Among the other distinguished persons whom the poetical reputation of Salvator Rosa brought to the conversazioni of the *via Babbuina* was the venerable Conte Carpigna, a Roman noble-

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the music-book of Salvator Rosa, the painter, in which are contained not only the airs and cantatas set by Carissimi, Cesti, Luigi (Rossi), Cavalli, Legrenze, Capellino, Pasqualini, and Bandini, of which the words of several are by Salvator Rosa, but eight entire cantatas, written, set, and transcribed by this celebrated painter himself. The book was purchased of his granddaughter, who occupied the house in which her ancestor had lived and died. *The hand-writing was ascertained by collation with his letters and satires*, of which the originals are preserved by his descendants. The historians of Italian poetry, though they often mention Salvator as a satirist, seem never to have heard of his lyrical productions; and as the book is not only curious for the music it contains, but for the poetry, I shall present my readers with a particular account of its contents, &c.—Other single airs by Luigi and Legrenze, the words by Salvator Rosa, fill up the volume, in which there is nothing so precious as the musical and poetical compositions of Rosa.—*Dr. Burney's History of Music.*

man of high rank, and one of the most noted patrons of his day. He was old and blind, and had never seen any of Salvator's pictures; but he had become so enamoured of his character, and of the talents which his own remaining senses permitted him to appreciate, that he was desirous of bequeathing some work of the poet-painter to his posterity; and on the verge of the tomb he bespoke a picture from him. This picture was ordered to be on a grand scale, and the subject was left to the artist. The subject chosen was a battle; and this battle-piece (one of the first great figure-pieces *bespoken* from Salvator) was the celebrated picture of which Borgognone was wont to say, "that there he had acquired all his principles of taste, judgment, and execution", in that arduous and particular style of painting, in which he himself afterwards so eminently excelled.*

* Giacomo Cortese (called "il Borgognone," from Burgundy, his birth-place) was a soldier of fortune, who

About the same period also Carlo Rossi bespoke a figure-piece from Salvator, who stipulated for the choice of his own subject, and produced his "Sorceress." For this picture, according to his own testimony, he only received fifteen doubloons. Rossi in the course of time was offered for it four hundred scudi; and Salvator,

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became enamoured of painting during his Italian campaigns. The battle of Constantine in the Vatican is related to have first fixed his vocation. He exchanged his sword for the pencil, and studied in most of the principal cities of Italy; but an unfortunate love-affair finally drove him into the sanctuary of the Church, and he took the habit of the Jesuits at Rome, where he continued till the year 1676 to pray and paint, and "to fight all his battles o'er again" with such life and energy that (says one of his biographers of his pictures) "sembra di vedere il Coraggio che combatte per l'onore e per la vita; e di udirvi il suono delle trombette, l'anitrire de'cavalli, e le strida di che cade"—one seems to see Courage fighting for honour and for life, and to hear the sound of the trumpets, the neighing of the horses, and the screams of the wounded.

in a letter to his friend Ricciardi, says of it, "I have prophesied that when I am no more, it will bring a thousand." Carlo Rossi was, no doubt, of the same opinion; for, to distinguish this picture from every other in his gallery, (then one of the first in Italy) a silken curtain was hung before it.—The curiosity it excited was insatiable.*

While occupied on a subject so congenial to his wild and sombre imagination, it appears that Salvator painted as he thought, and wrote as he painted: for his poetical "incantation," set to music by Cesti, may be assigned to this period.† This singular production is asserted

* Salvator, describing this picture in one of his letters, says, "It is in length two braccia and a quarter, and one and a half in height. Its price was fifteen doubloons, and it was done twenty years back."

This picture is now in the Conservatori palace in the Capitol.—*See Appendix.*

† Dr. Burney is of opinion, that this incantation furnished the idea of Purcell's celebrated cantata, beginning

"By the croaking of the toad."

to be "the happiest specimen of the strength and imagination of his poetry." It is a magical incantation of one distracted by love and by revenge. It bears a singular coincidence with the spells of Shakspeare's Hecate,* and intimately assimilates the genius of one who was

* This coincidence is so striking, that one might be tempted to suppose it was an imitation, but that Salvator's acquaintance with Shakspeare's works "comes not within the prospect of belief." In one who, like Audrey, has "*to thank the gods for not making her poetical*," to meddle with this *incantation* would be sacrilege! Its translation would come best from *him* who has conjured up the mysterious agency of "Manfred," and imagined scenes which the pencil of Salvator could best have illustrated.

CANTATA DI S. ROSA.

All' incanto, all' incanto!
E chi non mosse il ciel mova Acheronte.
Io vo magici modi
Tentar profane note
Erbe diverse, e nodi,
Ciò che arrestar può le celeste rote,

the Byron of painting, with his who is the Salvator of poetry. The character of Salvator's genius was altogether northern; so palpably northern, that the Italian ultras of the present day have pronounced his anathema, by placing him high in the school of *Romanticism*, with those whom it is disloyalty to praise, Boccaccio

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Mago circolo
Onde gelide
Pesci varij
Acque chimiche
Neri balsami
Miste polveri
Pietre mistiche
Serpi e nottole
Sangui putridi
Molli viscere,
Secche mummie
Ossa e vermini.
Suffumigij ch' anneriscano,
Voci orribili che spaventino,
Linfe torbide ch' avvelenino,
Stille fetide che corrompino,

and Ariosto. The superhuman agency which Salvator loved to employ both in his pictorial and poetical productions, was preferably selected from that sombre mythology, which was the inspiration of Shakspeare and the charm of Ossian. In his powerful originality, he turned with disgust from the worn-out imagery both of

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Ch' offuschino,
Che gelino,
Che guastino,
Ch' ancidano,
Che vincano l'onde Stigie.
In quest' atra caverna
Ove non giunse mai raggio di sole,
Dalle Tartaree scuole
Trarro la turba inferna
Farò ch' un nero spirto
Arda un cipresso, un mirto,
E mentre a poco, a poco
Vi struggero l'imago sua di cera
Farò che a ignoto foco
Sua viva imago pera,
E quand' arde la finta, arda la vera.

the Christian and heathen mythologies, from simpering seraphs and smirking cupids, from wrathful gods and tortured martyrs. When obliged by the tyranny of circumstances to select a subject from either, he chose by preference Saul and the Witch of Endor! the fate of Prometheus, (the embodying of a deep philosophy and the rebellion of the giants, a dogma in all religions, as being illustrative of a physical fact salient to the eyes of all nations!

Thus producing at the same moment a poem and a picture, a recitation and a cantata, "*Mandando fuori con l'opere, spiritosi pensieri, e talora bizzarre invenzioni,*" the Roman public beheld him with admiration.

His *Sorceress* had scarcely taken its place in the gallery of Carlo Rossi, when he executed for the same liberal friend his *Socrates swallowing Poison**, and also for the gallery Sonnini

* David, the chief of the modern French school, has treated the same subject under the title of *Les dernieres heures de Socrate.*

his *Prodigal Son*. He now gave full scope to his versatile genius, and painted with an almost equal success, in the most opposite styles, colossal figures and miniature landscapes, "*capricci*" for the *cortile* of San Bartolomeo, and altar-pieces for the churches of Lombardy,—where the court intrigues of the Vatican, and the envy of the academicians of St. Luc, could throw no obstacles in the way of his rising reputation. The Cardinal Omodei of Milan, struck by the pictures of Salvator during his visit to Rome, induced the fathers of the church and convent of *San Giovanni Case-rotte*, on his return, to bespeak from that painter their great altar-piece. The subject chosen by Salvator was Purgatory;* and the horrors of this

* This fine picture, which is now familiar to every English traveller, in the gallery of the Brera of Milan, where also may be seen a fine St. Jerome, by the same hand, was among the first seized by the French on their entrance into that city. The admiration of the French

probationary hell were depicted with all the terrible fidelity of one to whom human suffering was familiar; of one who had studied terror at its source, amidst volcanic explosions; who had *seen* the living sea of flame he *painted*, pouring destruction over suffering humanity, and burying in its merciless course man and his proudest monuments.

The Purgatory of Salvator is composed of two subjects; the suffering souls beneath raising

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for the works of Rosa is as singular as it is boundless, since of all painters, he is the most foreign to the French school. This taste has in a great measure grown up since the Revolution, as the following eulogium on Salvator by a French critic tends to prove.

"Doué d'une imagination brillante et fougeuse..... l'habitude des grandes pensées, des conceptions vastes et élevées en auraient fait un peintre digne d'éternizer par son mâle pinceau les glorieux évènemens d'une révolution politique telle que la notre: mais il vecût trop tôt, et trop loin des bords de la Seine."—*Galerie de Florence, Monge.*

their agonized looks and clenched hands in supplication to the Virgin, and that Virgin, seated above in glory, in her character of "*Nostra Maria Virgine del soffragio.*" The smiling benignity of her countenance, however, exhibits no sympathy derogatory to divine complacency; she appears insensible to the cries of her suppliants, and an angel in waiting in vain points out to her particular notice some spirits (who had, it appears, a friend at court).

This picture, which the Milanese still assert to be the *chef-d'œuvre* of Salvator, has by some been deemed a satire. By others it was taken *tout de bon;* and it excited so much admiration in the public, in spite of the attacks of all the painters in Lombardy*, that the Padri Olivetani bespoke another grand altar-piece for their church of *Santa Vittoria al corpo.*†

The subject, The Assumption of the Virgin,

* Passeri.

† This church, though built so recently as 1624, no longer exists in Milan.

was but little consonant to the genius of the painter; but yet (says a learned and impartial critic) it was "*Soggetto non solo egregio nella pittura, ma prestantissimo eziandio nella poesia,*" (one of great effect in pictures, and admirably adapted even for poetry.*) The *Padri Olivetani* were so satisfied with their altar-piece, that they hung beside it one of Salvator's great landscapes, which was pointed out to strangers by the Cicerone Monk as "*una cosa maravigliosa.*"†

Earning much, accumulating little, but no longer harassed by the pressure of daily exigence, the tyrant of free spirits, ("*la tiranna degli spiriti nobili,*") Salvator, in spite of every obstacle, had now advanced so far in personal consideration and professional fame, that he was enabled not only to raise, but to fix his own prices. This was the point he had so long laboured to attain; and from his

* Le finezze de' penclli Italiani. † Ibid.

estimate of the merits and value of his own works there was no longer any appeal. Unsusceptible of any sordid view, his firmness in this particular originated in an innate dignity of feeling, and a high sense of the respectability of the profession to which he did so much honour.* "In this respect (says one of his biographers) the profession stands greatly his debtor; for he rigidly sustained the reputation of the art and his own, and by his firm-

* A Roman noble endeavouring one day to drive a hard bargain with him, he coolly interrupted him to say, that, till the picture was finished, he himself did not know its value; observing, "I never bargain, Sir, with my pencil; for it knows not the value of its own labour before the work is finished. When the picture is done, I will let you know what it costs, and you may then take it or not as you please."—"Signor, io non pattegio mai col mio pennello, perchè non può esso saper il valore del suo lavoro finchè terminato noi l'abbiamo. Quando sara fatto, vi diro ciò che costa; e stara à voi il prendere."—*Pascoli.*

ness finally succeeded in obtaining a just appreciation of his glorious labours."*

Refusing all dictation on the subject of his pictures, he was wont to say, "Carpenters and joiners may work upon given plans, but genius never." The purchasers of his works were always the gainers by this hardy independence.†

* Carlo Rossi, who frequently paid more for one of Salvator's pictures than would have startled an Italian prince to think of, sometimes resisted the high prices which Rosa put on his works. On these occasions the painter would not abate a ducat; and Rossi withdrew without disputing the point, leaving a *champ libre* to more opulent chapmen. Rosa, having thus satisfied his self-esteem, and kept the picture for some time by him, most frequently sent it a present to Rossi, who durst not refuse it, lest he should lose a friend and a picture at the same time.

† "Jusqu'au choix de ses sujets (says a French critic) tout annonce l'originalité de son imagination. Ce sont toujours peu connus, et qui n'ont occupé le pinceau d'aucun de ses prédécesseurs. Aussi accordoit-il tant de supériorité aux peintres d'histoire, qu'il se fachoit et se croyoit humilié, lorsqu'on l'appeloit un admirable paysagiste." Every thing even to the choice of his subjects

Thus reserving the power of following the bent of his own genius, of reproducing himself in all the modifications of his masterly and extraordinary mind, and no less independent in his pecuniary than his professional relations, he resolutely emancipated himself from the domination of patronage; "and Heaven help *him* (says Baldinucci) who attempted to haggle with him!" A Roman prince, more notorious for his pretensions to *virtù* than for liberality to artists, sauntering one day in Salvator's gallery in the Via Babbuina, paused before one of his landscapes, and after a long contemplation of its merits exclaimed, "*Salvator mio!* I am strangely tempted to purchase this picture;—tell me at once the lowest price?"

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announces the originality of his imagination. These are always little known, and untouched by his predecessors. Accordingly he attached so great a superiority to historical painting as to be angry and count himself humiliated, when called an "admirable landscape-painter."

"Two hundred scudi," replied Salvator, carelessly.

"Two hundred scudi! *ohime!* that *is* a price! —but we 'll talk of it another time."

The Illustrissimo took his leave; but, bent upon having the picture, he shortly returned, and again enquired "the lowest price."

"Three hundred scudi!" was the sullen reply.

"*Corpo di Bacco!*" cried the astonished prince, "*mi burla, vostra signoria,* you are joking! I see I must e'en wait upon your better humour; and so *addio,* Signor Rosa."

The next day brought back the prince to the painter's gallery; who on entering, saluted Salvator with a jocose air, and added, "Well, Signor Amico, how goes the market to-day? have prices risen or fallen?"

"Four hundred scudi is the price to-day!" replied Salvator, with affected calmness; when, suddenly giving way to his natural impetuosity, and no longer stifling his indignation, he burst forth,—"The fact is, your Excellency would not now obtain this picture from me at any

price; and yet so little value do *I* put upon its merits, that I deem it worthy of no better fate than *this*;" and snatching the pannel on which it was painted from the wall, he flung it to the ground, and with his foot broke it into an hundred pieces. "*His Excellency*" made an unceremonious retreat, and returned no more to drive a hard bargain.

The story, as usual, circulated through Rome, to the disadvantage of the uncompromising artist; and confirmed the character, which has still remained with him, of being "*un cervello indomito e feroce*," a hot-brained and desperate fellow.

The princes of the family of Ghigi had been among the first of the aristocratic virtuosi of Rome to acknowledge the merits of Salvator, as their ancestors had been to appreciate the genius of Raphael.* Between the prince

* When Raphael was engaged in painting the gallery of his friend Agostino Ghigi, he was so much in love with a beautiful Roman lady, that his passion interfered

Don Mario Ghigi (whose brother Fabio was raised to the pontifical throne by the name of Alexander VII.) and Salvator, there seems to have existed much personal intimacy; and the prince's fondness for the painter's conversation was such, that during a long illness he induced Salvator to bring his easel to his bedside, and to work in his chamber at some small piece he was then painting for the prince.* It happened, that while Rosa was sketching and chatting by the prince's couch, one of the most fashionable physicians in Rome entered the apartment. He appears to have been one of those professional coxcombs, whose pretension, founded on unmerited vogue, throws a ridicule upon the gravest calling.

After some trite remarks upon the art, the doctor, either to flatter Salvator, or in imita-

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with his genius and his fame. Agostino persuaded the lady to pass her mornings in the gallery, and thus induced Raphael to continue his work.

* This is one of the very few instances recorded of Salvator's having worked in the presence of a second person.

tion of the physician of the Cardinal Colonna, who asked for one of Raphael's finest pictures as a fee for saving the Cardinal's life,* requested Don Mario to give him a picture of Salvator as a remuneration for his attendance. The prince willingly agreed to the proposal; and the doctor, debating on the subject he should choose, turned to Salvator and begged "that he would not lay pencil to canvass until *he*, the Signor Dottore, should find leisure to dictate to him *il pensiero e concetto della sua pittura*," the idea and conceit of his picture! Salvator bowed a modest acquiescence, and went on with his sketch. The doctor, having gone the round of professional questions with his wonted pomposity, rose to write his prescription; when, as he sat before the table

* This is the famous *St. John* of the Tribune, in the gallery of Florence. The physician was Messire Giacopo da Carpi. The picture afterwards fell into the hands of Francesco Benincedi, a Florentine merchant, who sold it to the Medici.

with eyes upturned, and pen suspended over paper, Salvator on tiptoe approached him, and drawing the pen gently through his fingers, with one of his old *Coviello* gesticulations in his character of the mountebank, he said "*fermati, Dottor mio!*—stop doctor, you must not lay pen to paper till I have leisure to dictate the idea and conceit of the prescription I may think proper for the malady of his Excellency."

"*Diavolo!*" cried the amazed physician, "you dictate a prescription! why, *I* am the prince's physician, and not *you!*"

"And *I, Caro,*" said Salvator, "am a painter, and not *you.* I leave it to the prince whether I could not prove myself a better physician than you a painter; and write a better prescription than you paint a picture."

The prince, much amused, decided in favour of the painter; Salvator coolly resumed his pencil, and the medical *cognoscente* permitted the idea of the picture to die away, "*sul proprio letto.*"

This open warfare on arrogant pretension, waged with a zeal more remarkable for its honesty and humour, than for its discretion, and that

"Sarcastic levity of tongue,
The stinging of a heart the world had stung,"*

enlisted among his enemies all who merited, and all who feared, his just but bitter animadversions.† "Some of the blockheads of the profession," says Passeri, "were wont to say publicly that *Salvatore era mala lingua*," (Salvator was evil-tongued,) "and that none es-

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* Lord Byron.

† To this indiscretion, and its effects on his fortunes, Salvator has made several strong allusions in his poetical works. In his fifth satire "*La Babilonia*," he observes:—

"L'aver sortito un volto austero e tetro
Dalla commune simpatia m'ha tolto;
Ed. il libero parlar me tien indietro."

"The austerity of my deportment has thrown me out of the pale of common sympathy, and the freedom of my speech keeps me in the shade."

caped him. But I, who long lived in habits of intimacy with him, even domesticated, may aver that I never knew a man so prodigal of praise to others, and truly to such a degree, that he frequently exceeded all bounds of commendation, and even lavished more praise than was strictly deserved. At the same time, it is certain, that in cases of sharp competition and of rivalry, when once he got the racket in his hand, he took the ball at the hop, and every body perceived at whom it was directed; but it was aimed with such grace, that even he who was struck was amused. For the rest, he was always prone to lavish praise, wherever praise was truly merited."* But while thus severe in his strictures on the arrogance of sturdy mediocrity, he was not less jealous of the rights of genius, and frequently expressed himself as if he thought none but superior minds should dare to decide upon the productions of superior minds. It is thus he is

* Page 430.

described as observing the common people of Rome, guided by their instincts, to give their mite of admiration to the master-works of the Pantheon; and as impatiently exclaiming, "What! can such as *they* detect the beauties of this work? Oh! did they but see it with Salvator's eyes!"

The courage with which he attacked the degradation of the art by men who were bound to maintain its dignity, furnished new reasons to the Academy of St. Luke for not receiving him into their Society; and "the reason they assigned for this cruel persecution," says Pascoli, "was that he had recently written some witty thing against them." It is supposed, however, that a *practical*, and not a written joke, had armed the academy at this particular epoch with new virulence against him.

A young surgeon, who had evinced some genius for painting, had been rejected by the dignified members of the church and state academy, as being, by his profession, unworthy of belonging to their august body. The young

dilettante was deeply and disproportionately mortified by this rejection; and he excited the compassion of Salvator, to whom he was known, both for his sufferings, and the weakness in which they originated. On the ensuing annual exhibition at the Pantheon, a picture of considerable merit was exposed with no name affixed to claim the applause which was lavished on it even by many of the academicians themselves.* The attention which

* In some of the lives of Salvator it is said that this picture was painted by the surgeon himself; Pascoli asserts that it was painted for him by Salvator.

"Fece egli perciò un quadro, e lo diede a un suo amico più cirusico che pittore a mettere in mostra a San Giovanni Decollato, ove si trovò egli, pare, un tempo che il concorso alla festa era maggiore," &c. ("To this end, he executed a picture and gave it to his friend, who was more a surgeon than a painter, in order that it might appear at St. John's, at a time when the concourse there was the greatest, &c.")—*Pascoli.*

From the acknowledged excellence of the picture, this version is the most likely to be true; perhaps, however, the picture was only touched by Salvator.

Salvator seemed to fix on it, as he stood distinguished among the crowd, induced one of the members of St. Luke to ask him if he knew the painter?

"Oh! very well," replied Rosa carelessly: "it is painted by a certain young surgeon, who has been rejected by the puissant umpires of St. Luke, on account of his profession; a most impolitic rejection, *Signori miei*, for not only as you *now* seem to allow, would the talents of this young man as a painter have done honour to your society, but he would have been invaluable in his surgical capacity, as he would always have been at hand to give lessons on anatomy, in which the academicians are so deficient, and to reset the unhappy limbs which they are in the daily habit of distorting."

Salvator, as usual, had the laughers on his side; but a murmur arose among all the painters present, which threatened to break forth into some overt acts; Salvator, however, extricated himself from the crowd, observing gaily to an acquaintance as he passed, "*Il*

campo è rotto, che si può salvar, si salvi," the camp is broken up, *sauve qui peut.**

From this time the painters of Rome, and more especially the academicians, entered into an organized conspiracy against the character, fortunes, and fame of the imprudent satirist,† who in his poem upon painting has embodied those severe epigrams which he launched *impromptu* with such carelessness in his daily conversations. "In spite, however, of this malignity (according to the testimony of one of his contemporary champions) he continued to

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* "Questo motto, non poco mordace, fu ben presto noto a tutti i pittori di Roma, quali gli si congiurarono contro." "This biting jest was soon known to all the painters in Rome, who conspired to revenge themselves of its author."—*Vita de S. Rosa.*

† So lively was the hatred he inspired, (says Baldinucci) that he never afterwards could obtain any of the public works. "Vennesi a conservare sempre vivo un tal livore, che fece si che adesso per ordinario non potesse mai venire fatto di essere impiegato nell' opere publiche."

maintain himself in high repute as an excellent painter, by works which were esteemed in many parts of Europe, and which rendered his name celebrated and immortal."* The envy and vindictiveness which embittered his life had no other effect upon his genius, than to excite its powers to their highest capability.

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* Con l'opere di pittura seppe per altro mantenersi non obstante le maledicenze, in credito di eccellente pittore; e queste valavano ben presto in molte parti dell' Europa, e resero il suo nome sempre più chiaro ed immortale."

Salvator appears always to have had confidence in the candour of posterity, and in the power of truth, as he himself beautifully expressed it:

"Noto è per tutto
Che suol l'odio, del vero essere il prezzo.
Della virtù maladicenza è frutto;
Ma col tempo alle Furie escon le chiome,
E s' accheta il livore orrendo e brutto
Le calunnie, una volta oppresse e dome,
Confesseran che con ragion gli emendi:
Che alfin la verità trova il suo nome."

La Pittura.

Professional criticism, in its shallow arrogance and technical jargon, went forth decrying his works as unworthy of public attention, asserting that his merit was confined to his *quadretti*; that he never could produce an historical picture; that his great figures were out of drawing, his flesh tints wooden (*del legno*), his colours livid (*smorti*), his attitudes rude (*rusticani*), his draperies scanty, his ignorance of the *Nudo* striking, and his "*arie di testa*" *tutte dispettose*.* To all this cant of criticism of men whom his giant genius considered as pigmies, he replied by his "DEATH OF REGULUS!" and envy for a moment stood silent and abashed.

The story of Regulus, the horrible destiny of a virtuous man and a patriotic citizen, is one of those satires on human society which history

* "Dispettoso," scornful; an expression which well belonged to the heads of Salvator, and strongly characterized his own.

unconsciously records, but which the genius of Salvator instinctively selected, as accordant with his own views and feelings. In contemplating such scenes, as they are faintly depicted in the page of the annalist, the spirits droop and the heart sickens at the wayward destinies of man; but in gazing on the splendid horrors of the Regulus of Salvator, the spectator revolts from the belief in such atrocities, and taking shelter in the classic scepticism of the age,* adds the death of this hero to the list of those "historic doubts," which the more scrutinizing logic of modern criticism raises in the perusal of whatever approaches in its character to the marvellous. †

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* Philosophie de l'Histoire, chap. 52.—*Voltaire.*

† The death of Regulus, one of Rosa's grandest compositions, was painted for Carlo Rossi, who paid for it one hundred piastres. An hundred doubloons were immediately offered for a *replico*, but in vain. All that could be obtained from the uncomplying artist, whose genius was beyond all sordid control, was a bold and

Salvator now continued to paint "*con valore e con calore*," says Pascoli, "well and warmly,"

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spirited etching by the same master-hand that painted the subject. "Had I that subject now to paint," said Salvator, in a letter to Ricciardi, "I would not take less than four hundred doubloons!"

On the death of Carlo Rossi, his heirs, the Signori Valtore and Tarpenti sold and dispersed the greatest part of his pictures. The Regulus was purchased at an enormous price by the Colonna family. The mal-administration of the revenues of this once illustrious house, about the beginning of the last century, and more lately the greedy division of moveable property by litigious and contending heirs (and not, as has been falsely supposed, the contributions levied by the French,) had caused the dispersion of the treasures of the superb gallery Colonna. Of the twenty-six admired Salvators, mentioned in the Colonna catalogue of 1783, two only now remain in the gallery, and these are his two Johns preaching in the wilderness. The vacant space, however, where the Regulus once hung, is still pointed out by the old Cicerone as a consecrated spot. The Regulus, together with Salvator's well-known "Pythagoras teaching his doctrines to the fishermen," is now in the possession of the Earl of

with industry and success. It appears to have been about this period that he exccuted his "St. Jerome in the desert" for Monsignor Costrigati, (the same, perhaps, which is now in the Brera at Milan,) several landscapes for the Abbate Castiglione, the Prince Sonnino, Count Paolo Campione, Cardinal Altieri, (*ed altri cavalieri*) and other gentlemen; most of which have passed during the last century into England. These were followed by subjects more analogous

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Darnley, at COBHAM HALL. It was purchased by his Lordship at a large price from an Italian, who brought part of the *debris* of the Colonna and other Roman galleries to England. There is also an *on dit*, that his Lordship pays five hundred pounds a-year for this picture. Of the etching, Salvator himself observes, in one of his letters to Ricciardi, "Per soddisfarvi circa a quel *pinxit* delle mie carte, ve l' ho messo per mia cortesia, e per far credere ch' io intanto l' ho intagliate in quanto l' avevo depinte; ma la verità è che dall' Attileo in poi, tra le grandi, e dal Democrito e Diogene della Scodella fra le mezzane, nessun' altra è stato da me colorita."—See the translation of the Letters in the Appendix.

to his philosophic genius; his POLYCRATES expiating his crimes, by that death to which he had doomed so many others; his DIOGENES FLINGING AWAY HIS CUP on seeing a child drink from the hollow of his hand; his Democritus meditating among the tombs (one of the most sublime of his conceptions*); and his Pindar and Pan, or Satire dictating to Poetry, (one of his most characteristic, if not one of his best pictures.) This allegorical picture was painted expressly for his friend, Don Mario di Ghigi, and it is believed still to ornament the palace of his descendants at Rome.† What is

* "Au milieu de tombeaux solitaires et ruinés, il a peint Démocrite environné d'ossemens d'hommes et d'animaux de toute espèce, confondus ensemble. Le philosophe les regarde avec un rire amer, et la tête appuyée sur sa main, il semble dire, 'Homme insensé! ne peut-on rire de tous vos grands projets, en voyant comment ils finissent!'"—*Taillasson.*

† In the terza stanza of the Palazzo Ghigi.—Vasi

most precious in it is the head of Pindar, a portrait of the painter himself, who, as he listens to the dictation of the arch satyr, seems to repeat his own severe diatribes on the age and society in which he lived.*

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mentions this picture in his Itinerario by the title of Un Satiro che disputa con un Filosofo, da S. Rosa. But I am given to understand, that the present prince altogether doubts the picture in question being authentic.

* Quando, 'l pensier a contemplargl' io volgo,
Col gran numero lor fan ch' io trasecoli
Gl' asini del Senato e quei del volgo.
Sù le cronologie più non ispecolo,
—Mi forza a dire il paragone, il saggio,
Che questo mio di Balaame il secolo.

La Musica.

CHAPTER VII.

1647—1657.

Death of Pope Urban VIIIth.—Its influence on the arts —Innocent Xth, (Pamfili)—Public works consigned to Bernini—Influence of the civil wars of France and England upon Italy—Popular discontents at Naples—Masaniello—Neapolitan Revolution—Masaniello declared Captain-general of the people—Salvator Rosa arrives in Naples—Is received into the councils of Masaniello—Joins the standard of *La Compagnia della Morte* under Falcone—Treachery of the Viceroy—Interview between the Duc d' Arcos and Masaniello—The wisdom and justice of Masaniello—He is supposed to be poisoned by the Viceroy—Loses his reason—His assassination in the Convent del Carmine.

WHILE the life of Salvator Rosa, with its persecutions and its triumphs, was furnishing one more illustrative page to the general history of struggling genius, the death of Pope Urban

VIII. in 1644 had added an article to the pontifical obituary. The "pious muse" of the Quirinal mourned the loss of her infallible poet; the arts themselves were not a little influenced by the death of a pontiff who was a Barberini; but the cavalier Bernini, who had become an heirloom of the pontificate, still kept his place near the chair of Saint Peter; and had obtained from his *new* Holiness, Innocent X.* permission to erect the fountain in the Piazza Navona, and to superintend other public works of the same description.

While the banishment of the Barberini was among the secondary causes of the rapid degradation of the declining arts, now hasten-

* "Pamfili Innocent X. connu pour avoir chassé de Rome les deux neveux d'Urban VIII., auquel il devoit tout; pour avoir condamné les cinque propositions de Jansenisme, sans avoir eu l'ennui de lire le livre; et pour avoir été gouverné par la Donna Olimpia sa belle sœur, qui vendit sous son pontificat tout ce qui pouvait se vendre."—*Voltaire.*

ing to their goal—while Innocent X. was occupied in multiplying palaces*, striking gold and silver medals in honour of himself and his protectress the Virgin, or in mediating between the contending ambassadors of France and Spain, (in whose contests their cooks and coachmen bore an armed part, and lives were almost daily lost for a point of precedence and etiquette),—he was suddenly called on to mingle in events which shook his own throne, by endangering those with whose interests the bestower of the divine right of kings is inseparably connected.

* Notwithstanding the murmurs of the Roman people (attacked alternately by famine and the plague) arose almost to insurrection, the Pope continued to waste vast sums of money in raising, or *finishing* churches and palaces. Among these were the Lateran, the Vatican, and the palace of the Campidoglio, besides a number of fountains, and the College de Propagandâ Fide, from whence young missionaries are despatched to all parts of the world to propagate the faith. It was built on the plans of Bernini.

The baseless war between France and Spain, undertaken in the year 1635, merely because "le Cardinal de Richelieu l'avait voulu," or because a bad minister desired to maintain his precarious place, was still desolating or occupying all Europe, and sacrificing millions to the sordid or ambitious views of one individual, when a contest of a far different nature and tendency broke forth. War had hitherto been the pastime of princes, a struggle for power and sway between king and king; but the war which was kindled towards the middle of the seventeenth century, in the most civilized countries of Europe, was a war of nations against their governments, of freedom against power; and the sudden and general impulsion resembles that crisis in the physical temperament, by which Nature exerts all her energies to throw off some long latent and destructive malady, which it is no longer able passively to sustain.

England, Holland, France, and Italy, were alike roused to resistance by the long, and, at

length, the intolerable pressure of bad governments,—of despotism drawn to its extremest tension, whose exactions, leaving the people nothing to expend but their blood, urged them at length to shed that blood in their own cause. The responsible chiefs of this system of misrule were the princes of the houses of Stuart, Austria, and Bourbon, names which eternally belong to that record in which Liberty has registered the deadliest of her foes. But the impelling agents were the bad men, who, under the name of Ministers, stood between these potentates and the people they governed—the Straffords, the Lauds, the Alvas, the Richelieus, the Mazarins, and the Arcos's.

Whatever variety of aspect civil warfare assumed at this period,—whether she moved forward steadily to the goal of redress with a solemn pace and a "sad-coloured suit," with the gloomy religious reformers of England,—or, led by love and cabal, pranked it in silken scarf and flaunting plume, and took cities

"*pour la belle des belles*" with the gay *Frondeurs* of France,—still the cause and object of resistance were the same:—unjust and overwhelming taxes, levied to carry on profitless and inglorious wars abroad, and to support the luxury and extravagance of a few worthless men at home.*

Innocent X., who had made the cause of the

* "Les guerres civiles commencèrent à Paris, comme elles avaient commencé à Londres, pour un peu d'argent." This is the remark of Voltaire, who has written history in a series of epigrams; but the "*peu d'argent*" exacted by Mazarin and his vile agent Emeri, to support the idle war against Spain and Austria, and to supply the festivities of the Palais Royal, like the ship-money in England, was the last drop which caused the overflowing of a cup filled to the brim with bitterness. The people and the parliament began the civil wars of France; the aristocracy, the De Retz, the Rochefoucaults, the Longuevilles, &c. only joined in them for their own selfish and ambitious views; and their vanity and intrigues gave a ridicule to the Fronde, which its glorious cause has never effaced.

Stuarts his own, had scarcely despatched Monsieur Rimuccini to Ireland, to protect Catholicism in her last hold in the British dominions with arms and ships, when the same causes which had urged on revolution in distant realms, brought it home almost to the gates of Rome.* The long-suffering slaves of Sicily and Naples broke their chains in the face of their tyrant, and in contempt of the Inquisition, which, with all their degradation, they never suffered to establish itself within the walls of their capitals.

* There is something amusing in the frank avowal of old Platina, the *Proser*-laureate of the Pope's, — that Innocent X. paused for a moment to think what he could make by the Neapolitan Revolution, and whether its commotions would not permit him to extend his own jurisdiction over Naples by aiding the rebels. Over-persuaded, however, by his nephews, he lent his assistance to the Spaniards to crush the Neapolitans; sent thirty thousand doubloons to the Viceroy, and permitted him to levy troops in the ecclesiastical states; thus arming Italians against Italians in the cause of despotism.—See *Vite de' Pontifici*, p. 861.

In the year 1647, the kingdom of Naples exhibited a spectacle of rapacity and misrule in the government, and of misery in the people, which even unhappy Ireland, in her worst days, has perhaps never surpassed. Besides the ordinary causes of wretchedness which operated under the Austro-Spanish dynasty, Naples was now exhausted by the annual levies of troops, which it was obliged to supply, to carry on the fruitless war in which the house of Hapsburg had been engaged. The ordinary revenue of the kingdom had been raised from 500,000 crowns to 9,000,000 livres; besides which, Charles V. in forty-three years, received ten donatives of three millions each; Philip II., who reigned forty years, received twenty-two extraordinary donatives of the like sum; under Philip III. and IV., up to 1646, the extraordinary taxes amounted to 300,000,000. But this was little when compared to the gabelles, the favourite tax of tyrants, which alone amounted to 33,000,000 per annum. These gabelles fell

upon every article of consumption, and they had reduced the people to the lowest extreme of misery. Fruits alone had hitherto been exempted, and the lower orders of Naples, denied all other sustenance but what they snatched from the prodigal bounty of their delicious climate, were reduced to subsist on this abundant, but not very nutritive class of edibles.

There is a state of public feeling, that, though veiled in the silence of brooding reserve, contains a mine of resistance, which the faintest spark may kindle into unextinguishable explosion. In this state were the people of Naples, when the *Duke d'Arcos*, the viceroy of the kingdom, and one of the most rapacious governors whom distant despotism ever intrusted with its unlimited power, laid an impost on all fruits coming into the capital, calculated to produce an increase of revenue of seventy millions *per annum*. The government thus became the instigator of one of the

most singular revolutions to which the pressure of extreme misery ever incited a spirit-broken and enduring people.

Every three years the treasures extorted from the kingdom of Naples by the grand visitor, an officer appointed for this purpose, were shipped on board the royal navy and transmitted to Spain. At the period immediately preceding the insurrection, the admiral's ship lay at anchor in the bay, freighted with some millions of treasure thus obtained, and destined, as usual, to supply the wasteful extravagance of the Spanish administration. This ship, with its precious cargo, was burnt; and the fire was attributed to the discontented nobles, who were suspected of having joined the people in effecting this daring outrage. The viceroy imprisoned the two Princes Caraffa, and promised the abolition of the offensive tax; but, too weak to punish, too sordid to redress, he trifled with the confidence of the lower classes, and insulted the nobles.

In the summer of 1647, when the public fermentation was beginning unequivocally to declare itself, the approaching celebration of the great national and religious festival of *our Lady of Carmel* appeared, for the moment, to obliterate all less joyous impressions. The principal spectacle of this "*gran festa*" was a sort of war-game, played by the youths of the city. A Turkish fortress was erected in the centre of the *Mercato del Carmine**. The

* *Il Mercato del Carmine* had, time immemorial, been the scene of all popular commotions, as it was of many historical events. It opens to the sea, and is flanked by the church, convent, and tower of the Carmelites. There, under the viceroys, all executions took place; and a perpetual scaffold was erected opposite a narrow street, called "*del Sospiro*," as it was thence the criminal first caught a view of the place of death.

On this spot, the young and princely Conrad was beheaded in 1268; here Masaniello carried on his singular revolution, and here his successor, the gallant and unfortunate Duc de Guise, intrenched himself in the *Torrione del Carmine*, which, after his defeat, was converted into a fortress with the name of Castello del Carmine.

crescent glittered on its ramparts, and it was defended by three or four hundred youths, who, with the name of Alarbes, were supposed to represent a species of Turkish militia. The besiegers of this strong hold of infidelity, the representatives of the Neapolitan nation, never failed to conquer the Alarbes; as the people never failed to rejoice in a victory which imaged the triumph of the cross over the crescent,—of the Neapolitans over their hated neighbours, the Turks!

The chiefs elected to command these opposed forces were, Scipione Gannatajo Pione, a bold brave youth of eighteen, who led on the Turks, and Tommaso Angelo Maya, the captain of the Neapolitans, whose familiar and abbreviated appellation of Masaniello, now belongs to history. On the morning of the seventh of July, the two commanders came to review their forces in the market, previously to the celebration of the festa. They were all habited alike in the customary Neapolitan suit of

coarse linen trowsers and tunic, fastened with as coarse a girdle, and without stockings; their arms were long canes or reeds, to which a pitched faggot was attached for burning the citadel at the hour of attack. Every eye was turned on Masaniello as he marched into the Mercato; for his election was a preconcerted event, and he had long been looked on as one who represented, in his story and condition, the sufferings and the grievances of the people at large. Masaniello was a handsome youth, of a lofty stature * and prepossessing air, acute, vivacious, endowed with an instinctive love of justice and hatred of oppression, and with a simple but powerful eloquence, the language of strong feelings and clear intellects. Though his profession was no higher than that of a fisherman, carrying on a little commerce between Amalfi (his native village in the gulf of

* History describes Masaniello as being particularly well-looking; many of his portraits are evidently caricatures painted to please the party-spirit of the day.

Salerno,) and the market of Naples, yet he is said to have taken a pride in an employment which the founder of his church, and the favourite apostle of his Redeemer had rendered sacred; and at an early age he obtained an extraordinary influence over his companions.*

* The Neapolitan revolution appeared so terrible in the eyes of the reigning governments of Italy, that infinite pains were taken to misrepresent and discolour its incidents. The first printed account of it issued from the government press of Naples. It was copied into a periodical journal of Parma, and was got up as a warning to all people who deemed themselves entitled to meddle with taxes, imposed at the will of their rulers. Bussi Rabutin, a man "of wit and pleasure about town," in the days of Louis XIV., threw a ridicule upon an insurrection made by the *canaille*, by some ludicrous incidents he attached to it; and even Tom D'Urfey, to please the Stuarts, got up a tragedy called Masaniello, intended as a slur on the recent commotions in England.

The following account is drawn from the least partial statements, and from some traditionary tales of the Neapolitans themselves, who still hold the memory of Masaniello in veneration.

Masaniello, though he had married in boyhood, and was already a father, had by prudence and industry contrived to save a small sum of money, and to support his little family with respectability for one so humble, when his young wife, who attended the markets with grain and fruits, endeavouring to pass the barriers without paying the toll, was seized and thrown into prison, and a fine levied on her husband of an hundred ducats. Plunged into the deepest indigence by an exaction which exhausted the savings of his laborious life, the hatred of the beggared fisherman of Amalfi against the tyranny of the underlings in office, became deep as the wretchedness into which they had plunged him. From effects so personal, his sullen and discontented spirit extended its broodings to the causes in which they originated; and in this mood he was found in the hut, which now (in the place of the vine-covered cottage he had been forced to abandon) afforded him a temporary shelter; and

he was elected captain of the Neapolitan Lazzaroni, to fight for the honour of Christ and our Lady of Carmel.

Masaniello and Pione had severally taken the field at an early hour of the morning, and begun their ordinary evolutions in the Mercato, when a dispute arose between the gardeners of Pozzuoli, their customers, and the officers of the new *gabelle* on fruits. The peasantry and the citizens alike refused to pay a tax which the Viceroy had solemnly promised to abolish from the 30th of the preceding month. The officers insisted, and the conflict became general and fearful. The gardeners flung their fruits on the earth, declaring they would rather give them to the people, than permit them to be seized by their common bloodsuckers. The General of the police attempted to interfere, by order of the Viceroy, and the tumult became still more violent, when Masaniello, springing on the steps of the church, commanded silence; and with the air and voice of one inspired, ex-

claimed, "My people, from this moment there is no *gabelle* in Naples!" He was answered by the approving acclamations of thousands. His own little troop, and that of Pione, rallied round their leaders, and were joined by some others. This force he divided into two corps, and placing himself at their head, he marched forth amidst the *vivats* of all Naples, to the Viceroy's palace, to demand a religious performance of the promise so often reiterated and so often broken. The shrewd and clever Duc D'Arcos, the profound diplomatist and master of that "*fourberie que l'on appelle politique*," thus taken on the hip, was confounded and intimidated. He sent away his family to the citadel of the Castello-Nuovo; he doubled his German guards, surrounded himself with his court, and trembled as he presented himself at the open balcony, beneath which the young fisherman of Amalfi, at the head of his boy-bands, armed only with reeds, called for a parley with the representative of majesty.

The Viceroy again promised the abolition of the *gabelle* upon fruit; but when the multitude cried out, "upon flour also," he replied, with a show of returning firmness, "that he might *moderate*, but could not abolish, any *gabelle* save that on fruit." It was then, that, after a moment's pause, Masaniello ordered his troop to follow him; and rushing through the gates of the palace, forced the foreign troops to fly before him. Traversing the sumptuous apartments, he commanded that all the splendid trappings of luxury, which were there accumulated at the expense of the people's blood, should be destroyed, without reserving a single object save the king's picture, which he said was "the image of a constituted authority, betrayed and abused by its worthless and rapacious ministers." To this he bowed reverentially, and this alone was saved from the common wreck.

The Viceroy and his Court, having escaped by secret passages, fled to the Convent of the

Minims, and thence found means of retiring to the fortified citadel of St. Elmo. Through the mediation of the popular Archbishop of Naples, Cardinal Filomarini, he condescended, from amidst his German and Spanish guards, to negotiate with Masaniello, promising to sign a paper, by which he bound himself to abolish the imposts upon victuals, and secretly offering an enormous pension to Masaniello, to engage him to abandon the people, or to betray them!

"I pray your Eminence to tell the Viceroy," said Masaniello with disdain, "that he alone can reduce the people to order, by the fulfilment of his promise. Let him abolish the *gabelles*, and he will find their lives and means devoted to the king, and their obedience secured to his own authority." The Cardinal is said to have remarked, that the air and manner of Masaniello exhibited all the elevation and firmness of a soul which belongs to the highest order of character.

On the receipt of this proposition, the Viceroy shut himself up in St. Elmo, and thus formally abandoned the city to a low-born youth of three-and-twenty, who in the space of a few hours beheld himself its absolute master, without having incurred the reproach of shedding one drop of blood.

The first acts of his authority were to disarm the foreign guards, to open the state prison of St. Giacomo, where hundreds of persons were incarcerated for the non-payment of taxes, which they had not the means to discharge, and to proclaim by sound of trumpet the abolition of the *gabelles* on all articles of subsistence. The people of all classes returned the most rapturous applauses to the blast of that war-trump (for the first time sounding to the rally of hope and of prosperity), which relieved them from the urgent approaches of famine, and restored them to that abundance which Nature had provided in the most fertile region of her creation.

The imposts abolished, the *bureaux* in which they had been collected became useless, or served only as monuments of former degradation, and precedents and engines for future grievances. Masaniello ordered them to be destroyed, together with all the registers, accounts, and audits they contained; commanding at the same time that the ill-gotten treasures of the harpies who presided over them, and whose enormous wealth was raised on the ruin of the people, should be consumed; that nothing should be reserved but works of art*—nothing saved but the lives of the worthless owners.

* Masaniello sent all the pictures to the Convents, except the portraits of the King;—these he caused to be hung under canopies at the corners of the streets, to remind the people that they were not rebels, but fighting only against the mal-administration of the King's servants. The popular cry was, "Long live the King, and death to the bad government!"

This most singular order, and the manner in which it was executed, forms a striking feature in the history of popular insurrections. Jewels, gems, gold and silver ornaments, specie, the richest tapestry, and the most costly furniture, piled together in gorgeous heaps before the doors of the financial palaces, were fired by the faggots intended for the service of our Lady of Carmel, and were consumed to ashes in the presence of thousands, who looked coldly on, and (in obedience to the law of their chief, on whom they had bestowed the title of CAPTAIN OF THE PEOPLE,) refrained from touching a single valuable. Not a gem was secreted, not a sequin purloined, not a house entered, save such houses as had been marked as belonging to the officers of the *gabelles*. Not the hair of one Neapolitan head was injured—not one drop of blood, even of their foreign soldiery, was shed. The people, restored to the full enjoyment of the riches of their fertile soil, beheld, not with eyes of covetousness, but with feelings of con-

tempt, those treasures which had tempted man to crush his brother man to the earth.

The character of Masaniello, as it developed itself under the pressure of novel and extraordinary circumstances, seemed to display almost superhuman qualities and capabilities. He scarcely took any food, slept but little, was in perpetual activity. At once mild and resolute, severe and just, he remodelled the police, and directed its operations with absolute authority and with admirable intelligence. He erected batteries on the most exposed points, threw artillery into suspicious situations, invested the Convent of San Lorenzo, the repository of the arms and archives of the city, and took it almost without resistance, although the government had stationed a party of Calabrian banditti in the belfry to defend it. He restrained the people from all acts of violence, protected the nobility, and administered justice with inflexible impartiality. As unambitious

as disinterested, he was solely occupied with the great object of restoring the people to their ancient franchises, and forcing the Viceroy to a formal renunciation of the gabelles. While the high-born Duc D'Arcos shut himself up in the Castello-Nuovo, to which he had fled from St. Elmo, as being nearer the sea—while he affected to negotiate, in order to gain time, and *betray* the man he could not *conquer*,—Masaniello, in his fisherman's habit, stood unarmed at the open casement of his own humble dwelling, giving orders with an authority none disputed, and with a judgment from which none appealed; and thus strengthened his empire over public opinion by the display of all those qualities which tend most powerfully to win its suffrages.

Thus occupied during the day, he was wont at night to hold council with his most trusted friends, and to add, on the exigence of the occasion, new clauses to that short but efficient code,

which common sense, strong sympathy, and intuitive knowledge, had dictated; a code into which no quibble or sophistry gained admittance, and which no theoretical abstractions rendered unintelligible. Sometimes he "*gave his little senate laws*," under the roof of his own lowly dwelling;—sometimes escaping from the narrow confines of his hovel, and the sultry atmosphere of the noisy Mercato, he ascended the monastic keep, the now celebrated *Torrione del Carmine*, a dark and solitary tower, adjoining the convent, devoted by the monks to mysterious purposes of religious punishment, but now converted by Masaniello into a strong hold.

In this singular watch-tower, which commanded the bay, the Castello-Uovo, the Castello-Nuovo, and all the fortresses of the Viceroy, Masaniello at midnight sat in close but not secret council. The torches stuck against its rugged walls must have thrown their red and dusky light upon many a form and visage which romance would delight to conjure to its

ideal scenes, and which painting seizes with rapture for its force of expression and strong effect of *chiaro oscuro.* In the midst of these graphic groups appeared one, who looked on them, not only with a poet's, but a painter's eye; one, on whom not a form, a tint, a light, a shadow, was lost; who sketched while he counselled, and studied while he listened; whose versatile genius seized the moral and the material aspect of the objects which surrounded him; and whose pen and pencil would alike have given Masaniello to posterity, had not the extraordinary destiny of the *Captain-general of the Neapolitan people* made for him a distinguished place in the history of the world:—this man was Salvator Rosa.*

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* "Le génie s'étend et se reserre sur tout ce qui nous environne." Several sketches of Masaniello, and of his most noted associates, were made by Salvator Rosa, "*col lume di torcia:*" they are to be found among his etchings. Cardinal Fesch shewed the author a full-

The transition from the tranquil studio of the Babbuino, from the splendid saloons of the Ghigi and the Rossi, to the perilous and dusky councils of Masaniello in the *Torrione del Carmine*, was strange and striking, but not out of keeping with the principles and modes of action of him who deemed liberty worthy of purchase at any price, and who felt existence only through strong excitements and powerful sensations.

He, who some years before had bidden a bitter, and as he believed a last, adieu to that country, which, though his native land, was associated in his mind with remembrances the most painful and with feelings the most mortifying, now came to its succour, on catching its first free aspirations, and brought to its cause his personal devotion, his time, life, fortune, and powerful genius: for true patriotism,

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length painting of Masaniello, attributed to Salvator, in his palace at Rome, and the amiable Archbishop of Tarentum shewed her portraits of Masaniello and his wife by the same hand.

like true love, readily forgives the error and the coldness which is followed by repentance and reformation *.

Salvator was the courted of the courted, equally distinguished by the envy of rivals, and the homage of friends; and he was receiving orders from all parts of Europe, when reports reached Rome of the approaching revolutions of Sicily and Naples, — of the murmurs and discontents both of the people and of a large portion of the nobility. He instantly shut up his house † and set off for Naples, where he

* Passeri and Baldinucci pass over this most important and singular event in Salvator's life. Being *church and state men*, and living in due fear of the Inquisition, they probably thought they best served the memory of their friend by this silence. Tradition and more modern biographers were less timid, and have preserved an incident which strongly illustrates the character of one, who believed that heaven itself guided him, when his vocation was the liberty of his native land.

" Per tutto è Dio, ne può mancar sollievo
A chi *la libertade* ha per Arturo."—*La Babilonia.*

† Pascoli, who wrote his " lives" some twenty or thirty

was received with distinction, not only by the public, but by the members of that profession from which he had hitherto only experienced persecution and calumny. The school of Spagnuoletto (who was himself sinking in years and in iniquities) was passing away, or rather it was succeeded by that of Aniello Falcone, Spagnuoletto's most celebrated pupil, and the friend

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years after Salvator's death, mentions this visit to Naples with due reserve, and avoids all political allusion. "Having become rich, he (Salvator) began to ruminate a journey once more, to shew himself under the influence of his bettered fortunes,—a vanity common to all, who, born in poverty, seek to return to their *nest* in their changed state to play the great man." ("Egli pareva già d'esser riccone, quando ruminava di ritornarsi di bel nuovo a farsi vedere a migliore fortuna alla patria; vanità quasi commune ad ognuno che nato sia poverello, il tornare cangiando stato nel *suo nido* a far da signore.") Salvator, however, chose a singular moment, "*per far da signore;*" for he arrived in Naples in the last days of 1646, just as the Viceroy had laid the imposts on fruit, which had thrown all Naples into fermentation.

of Salvator. The pupils of Falcone had adopted the political tenets of their master. They were young men of ardent spirits and factious dispositions, and they had occasionally appeared in open hostility to the foreign troops * which then garrisoned Naples; and which, though comparatively a small force, exercised every sort of violence against the unhappy Neapolitans. In a broil between a party of these troops and the pupils of Falcone, at some public festival, a near kinsman and favourite pupil of the painter had been murdered by a soldier in open day. The murderer was concealed, or protected by the government; and the friends and partisans of the murdered man finding that no justice existed for them, took the law into their own hands, and committed the punishment of this atrocious crime to private vengeance.

At the moment, when the long smothered

* German and Spanish.

discontents of Sicily and Naples were on the point of exploding, the school of Aniello, with a numerous addition of their kindred, friends, and companions, formed themselves into a band, which, in allusion to the melancholy event that originated their association, was called "*La Compagnia della Morte.*" Their object was the destruction of the foreign soldiers: their chosen captain was Falcone; and Salvator Rosa on his arrival in Naples was enrolled in their corps, and regarded as its most distinguished member.

On the first breaking out of the revolution of 1647, *La Compagnia della Morte* offered its services to Masaniello, who, it may be supposed, accepted of their alliance with transport*; and

* As the only accounts of this revolution allowed to be printed in Italy were favourable to the government, the *Banda della Morte* are always briefly described as making "*oribili stragi,*" horrible carnage. During the reign of Masaniello no "*stragi*" of any kind occurred, except that of the bandits who fell victims of their own treason in the church of the Carmelites. Masaniello, however,

it is historically recorded of Salvator, that he was "*uno dei soldati più fidi di Masaniello*," one of Masaniello's best soldiers. Hitherto this bloodless revolution had been effected without the loss of a single life. But while Masaniello was endeavouring to preserve the tranquillity of the city, and to negotiate for the formal abolition of the imposts, the Viceroy in his fortress was laying plans for a civil war, by fomenting disputes between the aristocracy and the people, and by drawing towards Naples the troops stationed at out-quarters. He erected

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twice beat the regular troops in pitched battles; and if the band of Falcone (consisting of young men, artists, &c.) were enabled without regular arms or discipline to master the veteran troops and occasion a carnage among them (the only opportunity offered for giving grounds for the statements in question), there is nothing in the circumstance discreditable to their character. All the dictionaries of painters, however, repeat the "*oribili stragi*" committed by Falcone's school with becoming and loyal emphasis.

barricadoes round the royal palace to preserve a communication with the Castello-Nuovo; placed foreign guards at all the avenues; released the Duca di Matalona (one of the Caraffi) from prison, to induce him to intrigue with the people for the destruction of Masaniello, by a promise of pardon for all past offences, and of honours beyond his utmost ambition: in a word, the Viceroy had recourse to all those means which mark the crooked and fraudulent policy of feeble but despotic diplomacy.* It has ever been the crime, or the folly, of governments, to apply their remedies to what is accidental in great public commotions; and, in their apprehension

* The Viceroy having promised the people a charter, granted them by Charles V. to place it at their own disposition, he twice attempted to deceive them by a paltry forgery. The Duca di Matalona, the bearer of the first of these false documents, which was at once detected, was dragged from his house and thrown into prison; and from that moment the people and the nobility separated, and the failure of the revolution was secured.

of the sudden developement of physical force which accompanies them, to overlook the deeper moral causes which have prepared their explosion.* Regarding public abuses as private (or in the modern phrase, as *vested*) rights, and secretly determined to uphold them at all costs, their object is ever to suppress, and not to remove, popular discontents.* The hour of resistance, they urge, is not that of concession; and, resistance once controlled, its causes are immediately neglected and forgotten. Such governments therefore, when powerful, punish with severity; when timid or feeble, they intrigue, undermine, deceive, and throw aside every consideration of truth, justice, public

* In no country has this policy been more perversely and perseveringly pursued than in Ireland. The open purchase by the Government of the *rights* of the aristocracy, in their rotten boroughs, as of a private property, which took place at the Union, shews to demonstration the *object*, and the whole history of Ireland declares the *means* of its proconsular *regime*.

dignity, and private respectability.* To eradicate the evil (the short sure cut to public tranquillity) is, in their estimate, to betray the ruling castes; and even when it escapes not their apprehension, nor exceeds their power, it is the last desperate measure to which they give a reluctant consent. To crush and to betray, are the sole schemes of domination, to which the legislators of abuse are accustomed voluntarily to resort.

Hitherto the simple wisdom of Masaniello, and the unanimity of the people, had defeated this tortuous and detestable policy; the troops marching upon Naples were met by him and his irregular forces, and taken prisoners. When brought triumphantly to Naples, and treated by Masaniello's orders with kindness, the Germans availed themselves to such an extent of his hospitality, that, in a state of intoxication, they ran through every quarter of the city, shouting "*Viva il popolo! Viva Masaniello!*"

* The recent counter-revolutions in Spain and Portugal.

The investment of *San Lorenzo*, the defeat of a division of German and Spanish troops near Torre del Greco, the pertinacity of Masaniello, who, at the head of 150,000 men, steadily demanded the abolition of the *gabelle*, and the restoration of the charters of Ferdinand of Arragon and Charles V., convinced the Viceroy that the measures, as yet attempted, were unavailing; and he resolved to accomplish that by crime, which could not be effected by fraud or force. The actors in this tragedy were a troop of banditti in the service of the government; the scene, the church of the Carmelites; and the time, the moment when the Cardinal Filomarino was to occupy the attention of the people by reading to them *(from the altar too)* a treaty of peace, by which the Viceroy once more pledged himself to abolish the *gabelle*, and to restore the royal charter. All Naples abandoned itself to confidence and joy; the market-place, the church, the convent, were crowded to excess; but among the people it was observed, that there mingled men whose

dark and unknown faces and mysterious carriage excited suspicion. Among these Masaniello recognized Antonio Grosso, a well-known captain of banditti, and some of his terrific band; but Perrone, a man of low character but much talent, who, acting as a spy for the government, had gained a great ascendancy over Masaniello, restored confidence by frankly avowing that some outlaws from the Abruzzi had entered the town to witness the spectacle, and share the triumphs of a cause which they had warmly espoused. Confidence thus restored, Masaniello was proceeding carelessly towards the church, when a single shot from an arquebuss whistled by him in the cloisters, and he had scarcely pronounced the word "*traditori*," when a discharge of fire-arms, mingled with the shrieks of thousands, echoed through the vast edifice. The cry of "Masaniello is assassinated,—down with the banditti," repeated through the church, was heard in the market-place. The multitude rushed in to the assistance of their chief; the assassins were driven

out and forced to fly; some few were poniarded on the steps of the altar; others were struck down in the cloisters, and all was confusion and sanguinary contest, when Masaniello himself arrested the carnage by his voice and presence. Not a shot had reached his person—the people deemed him invulnerable, and cried "*Al miracolo! Viva Masaniello! Viva nostra Signora del Carmine!*" A hundred and fifty banditti are said to have fallen victims to the popular rage; one of them, and that one was Antonio Grosso himself, before he died, confessed to a priest, that the conspirators against the life of Masaniello were the Duca di Matalona, his brother Don Peppo Caraffa, Perrone, and the Viceroy, by whom the others were employed. Thus the *first blood* that stained this revolution, flowed in consequence of the intrigues and treachery of that government, whose tyranny and extortion had forced on the experiment of reform.

The people now had lost all confidence in the court and aristocracy; and even Masaniello,

hitherto so mild and so confiding, became suspicious and melancholy. He saw that his life was attacked by the government, and that the loss of all he had won for the people would be the consequence of its extinction. At length, however, a treaty was concluded between the Viceroy and the people, in which the former had the dexterity to insert a clause, rendering the whole transaction nugatory. The fraud was not immediately perceived, and a perfect reconciliation between the government and the insurgents took place.

On a special invitation from the Viceroy, Masaniello gave a reluctant consent to visit him in the Castello-Nuovo. It was not till the Cardinal had suggested the necessity for a frank and open reconciliation, and of setting the example of confidence, that the unambitious Captain-general agreed to the meeting. When the Cardinal and officers of state came to conduct Masaniello to the Castle, he was still in his white linen jacket and fisherman's cap; and to all remonstrances on the unfitness of his garb

for the occasion, he replied, that "it was the dress of his class and profession, the dress in which he had fought for the rights and privileges of the people, and the only dress he should ever wear with pride, or look upon with triumph." At length, however, a threat from the Cardinal, of excommunication, forced him to yield; and when he again appeared before the people, he was mounted on a superb charger, dressed in a rich habit of white and silver, his velvet hat shaded with a profusion of feathers, and his air that of a graceful and handsome cavalier. The people could not satiate themselves with gazing on him; and when the procession began to move to the Castello-Nuovo, he was followed by sixteen companies of cavalry and infantry, well armed and accoutred, and by 50,000 of the Neapolitan population. The Cardinal rode beside him in grand pontificals; and the officers of state went before in the Viceroy's carriages. At the gates of the Castle the captain of the guards welcomed him with

military honours; and in the Viceroy's name invited him to alight and enter.

Masaniello for a moment paused, and threw an anxious eye, from the formidable portals he was about to pass, to the devoted multitude who followed him: then springing with dexterity from the saddle upon the back of the noble animal he rode, so as to be seen by all, he drew the charter from his bosom, and holding it up to the people, addressed them with his usual energy. He commanded them never to lay down their arms till the charter of their liberties was signed by the King of Spain and his ministers. He entreated them to believe that the public good had been the sole object of his exertions, and that it alone should be his recompense. He said, that he blushed to appear before them in such gaudy trappings, but that, in assuming them for the moment, he obeyed the Viceroy and Mother Church; but he added with a melancholy pleasantry, "As soon as the nets I have cast shall bring that liberty to shore, for which I have so long fished in

troubled waters, you shall behold me in my old garb and calling, demanding of *you*, my people, nothing, save that at my last hour, you will each and all say an Ave Maria for my soul's peace." Tears and acclamations followed this appeal; and moved by the emotion of the people, he was about to withdraw, when, turning back with lingering anxiety, he reminded them that in all they had done, they had acted not less for the sovereign's interest than their own. "For me," he added, "I am about to trust myself confidently into the hands of the King's representative. Yet ere I go, I pray his Eminence, the Cardinal, to give us all the benefit of his holy benediction." The Cardinal advanced, and waved his hand over the heads of kneeling thousands; and in the midst of this simple but imposing ceremony, Masaniello entered the gates of him who had so recently plotted his murder.

He had not, however, long disappeared, when the people began to suspect some new treachery; and their breathless silence was followed by

low mutterings, which broke forth into tumultuous cries. They called for Masaniello, and after a little time he appeared at a balcony between the Viceroy and the Cardinal. His simple exclamation of "*I am here, my people,*" accompanied by the pressure of his fore-finger on his lip, stilled the uproar, and the silence of the tomb prevailed in the Largo di Castello.

Masaniello turned to the Viceroy and said, "Behold, how easily the people *may* be governed."—He then dismissed the multitude, assuring them all was well, and enjoining them to retire peaceably to their houses. The sixteen companies filed off in military order, and the multitude followed in silent obedience.—A conference followed; Masaniello was confirmed in his post of captain-general of the people by the government, and was reconducted in state to his hovel in the Mercato, by the equipages and principal officers of the Viceroy's court.*

* "Le Viceroi n'osoit s'opposer ni aux actions ni aux entreprises de Masaniello: il trembloit à son seul nom." *Histoire de la Révolution de Naples.*

But his mission was nevertheless now hastening to its close! On the 13th of July, he accepted an invitation to a fête, at which some of the court were to be present, at Pausilippo. The party proceeded by water; and in the course of this splendid little voyage, Masaniello, exhausted by the fatigues of the day, called for iced water, which was presented to him by *Onofrio Caffriero*, one of the Viceroy's officials and familiars. Whether he really was poisoned in this draught, as was generally asserted, is uncertain. Extraordinary exertions, long want of sleep, and an over-worked brain, are causes of mental derangement, which have affected wiser men than the fisherman of Amalfi; and under such circumstances of excitement, a glass of iced water might in itself become deleterious: but on the other hand, the administration of a poisonous drug was no improbable project for the Viceroy*; and men of his stamp,

* "Ce fut une promenade bien funeste pour Maza-

with whom a political end sanctions every crime, deserve to bear the full weight of that odium, which the eager credulity and instinctive dread of the multitude seldom fail to attach to such governors, where there is room for coupling a secret villainy with their known interests and wishes*. But however this may have been, marks of insanity manifested themselves immediately after the voyage; his acts of justice became tinctured by a merciless severity; and his most ordinary actions were suddenly distinguished by wildness and incoherency. It was determined by the represen-

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nielle, s'il est vrai, comme on l'a crû, et comme il n'est que trop vraisemblable, qu'il y avala du poison, qui lui fut donné par ordre du vice-roi dans l'eau que Mazanielle but, après avoir mangé quelque fruit."—*Histoire de la Révolution de Naples.*

*. The author of the *Histoire de Naples* states distinctly, that Masaniello was poisoned by order of the Viceroy; but the ordinary effects of poison are inflammation, and not insanity.

tatives of the people to send a deputation to the Viceroy, offering a return to obedience, provided the terms of capitulation were observed; and to depose Masaniello from his high office, and place him in confinement, surrounded by all the comforts of which his unhappy situation was susceptible. But the Viceroy had already resolved on a more summary procedure. On the night before the festival of *our Lady of Mount Carmel*, Masaniello had become so outrageous, that he had been taken and bound; and this act of violence having restored him to his senses, he was permitted on the following day to attend divine service in the *Chiesa del Carmine*. He presented himself to the people with an air of sadness and depression; they received him with respect, and conducted him in silence to the church, where the Cardinal, who officiated, came forward to receive him. Masaniello returned his embrace, and placed a paper in his hand—a written paper directed to the Viceroy. It was his voluntary

resignation. In giving it, he observed, "that those whom he had saved, were about to abandon him, that his career was over! and that, after having made one last tour of that city which he had preserved, he would return to the church, and await the death-blow which would now soon be struck." Then releasing himself from the arms of the Cardinal, who in vain essayed to cheer him, he once more attempted to address the people, and was recommending to them the care of their own liberties, when he should no longer be there to protect them, but his strength and his ideas suddenly failed him, and two monks of the convent, perceiving his disorder, withdrew him from the tribune, and conducted him to their dormitory. There, flinging himself on a mattress, he was sinking into that deep repose he so much needed, when, roused by the vociferation of his own name, he started from his bed, hastily stepped forth, and firmly but mildly asked, "My people, do you seek me?" He was

answered by a discharge of fire-arms, and instantly fell at the feet of his assassins, exclaiming "*Traditori! ingrati!*" His head was severed from his body by a butcher, and sent to the Viceroy, who is said to have gazed on it with a triumphant smile: but so long as the causes of revolution shall continue to exist in Naples, its tyrants will not cease to tremble at the proverbial expression that "*Masaniello non è morto!*"

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY S. AND R. BENTLEY, DORSET STREET.


00026684

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 03 December, 2015